

### Bahraini students ransack school

MANAMA (AP) — A group of students ransacked their school in downtown Manama on Monday, destroying the coffee shop and laboratories and smashing windows in an effort to ignite an anti-government riot. High school students said some 40 teenagers were involved in the morning rampage at the Ahmad Al Omran school in the Hoor district. Witnesses said policemen hurled tear-gas canisters from outside the gates to disperse the protesters. Classes were suspended for the rest of the day. There were no reports of casualties Monday. In a similar riot at another school last week, policemen fired rubber bullets, fatally wounding a teenager (see page 2). Two hours after Monday's unrest, reporters saw two police jeeps parked at the Ahmad Al Omran school, which has a 1,000-strong student body. A third vehicle was patrolling the street. The school grounds were deserted. But some students were loitering outside. It was the fifth boys' school to witness unrest since rioting erupted on the island in mid-December.

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### Sharon vows to quadruple Israeli settlers

TEL AVIV — A leader of the right-wing opposition, former Defence Minister Ariel Sharon, vowed Monday to quadruple the number of Israeli settlers in Palestinian territories if the Likud Party comes to power next year. "Our first task when we are in power will be to increase to half a million the number of Jews" living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Mr. Sharon told parliament. More than 120,000 Israelis live in 144 settlements in the Palestinian territories. Another 160,000 live in annexed East Jerusalem. Mr. Sharon said the best way to prevent anti-Israeli attacks in the occupied West Bank town of Hebron, a hotbed of Arab-Jewish friction, would be to "install 5,000 Jews instead of the 450 who live there." He accused Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's left-wing government of "hating the settlers" and failing to protect them against Palestinian militant attacks. Two Israeli settlers were shot dead last week near Hebron in a militant ambush on a bus. Environment Minister Yossi Sarid, of the left-wing Meretz Party, said: "The government will do everything necessary to create an irreversible fait accompli between now and November 1996," when general elections take place in Israel.

### Higher Education Council meets

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Ghazi Ben Muhammad, the cultural secretary of the King, on Monday attended a meeting of the Higher Education Council chaired by the higher education minister and council president, Rafeh Al Saud. The council heard a report by the higher education development committee which was set up upon directives by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan in June 20, 1994.

### AOAD begins Amman meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — The executive council of the Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development (AOAD) opened its meetings in Amman Monday evening. Agriculture Minister Mansour Ben Tarif opened the three-day meetings in which representatives of Algeria, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Sudan and Morocco are participating. In his opening address, Mr. Ben Tarif said Jordan had always been supporting joint Arab action in all fields. He said achieving food security in Arab countries can be achieved only through joint action and cooperation. Acting Prime Minister Abdul Razaq Al Rawahdeh on Monday met with Bahraini Minister of Trade and Commerce Ahmad Ben Qassem who is current chairman of the AOAD's executive council. Discussion at the meeting focused on cooperation between Jordan and the organisation.

### Khaddam, Murphy discuss peace

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Syrian Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam held talks on Monday with the former U.S. deputy secretary of state, Richard Murphy, officials said. Mr. Murphy, who heads a delegation here from the American Council for Foreign Relations, also met Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa, they said. He is visiting Syria for several days, according to the U.S. embassy.

### Fed governor quits

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Federal Reserve Governor John Laware has decided to resign and will not attend Tuesday's meeting of the bank's policy-making open market committee, the U.S. central bank said Monday. Mr. Laware, 67, had decided to retire, a Fed spokesman said. His resignation will not officially take effect until April 30, but Mr. Laware will not attend Tuesday's open market committee meeting, the Fed spokesman said.

### Gore 'non-committal' on embassy transfer

JEDDAH (AP) — U.S. Vice-President Al Gore was non-committal when an Islamic leader said that America should not shift its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The leader said Monday. Hamid Al-Gabid, secretary general of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC), told a news conference he called four days after he met Mr. Gore in Riyadh: "I raised the subject of the transfer of the American embassy in Israel. He did not give any explicit answer. Instead, Mr. Gabid said, Mr. Gore 'wanted the OIC to continue supporting the Middle East peace process.'"

### Israel starts work on grid connection

TILAT (AFP) — Israel on Monday started work in Ararat near the Red Sea to link electricity grids between Iraq and Arabia, officials said. The work which will take three months involves building a high-tension wire about eight kilometres long at a cost of \$300,000.

## King, Clinton hold talks at White House

Combined agency dispatches

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein and U.S. President Bill Clinton met at the White House on Monday for talks expected to centre on the developments in the Middle East peace process and American economic and military assistance for Jordan. The meeting began at the Oval Office and no statement was available by press time. However, Jordanian officials had said that King and President Clinton were expected to discuss the developments in the Jordanian-Israeli track of negotiations after the two countries signed a peace treaty in October and progress in other tracks of the Middle East peace process. King Hussein was expected to reaffirm Jordan's commitment to achieving a comprehensive Arab-Israeli settlement in the region and the Kingdom's willingness to help advance negotiations between Israel's separate negotiations with the Palestinians, Syria and Lebanon.

The King's talks with President Clinton were attended by Vice-President Al Gore and Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and several other ministers on the Jordanian side. Mr. Gore, during a visit to Jordan last week, reaffirmed the Clinton administration's resolve to write off the Kingdom's outstanding official debts to the U.S. in full this year and said Jordan's economic and military needs would be discussed in detail during the King's current visit. The head of the leading pro-Israel lobby group said debt forgiveness for Jordan was in the U.S. national interest and would show other Arab countries that "a willingness to work towards regional stability provides significant benefit."

Jordan has taken "meaningful risks" in concluding a peace treaty with Israel, Steven Grossman, head of the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee, told the AP in an interview. "There is no question that virtually every leader in the Middle East is going to be attentive to the way in which the agreement plays out." The King planned several trips to Capitol Hill during a four-day visit. He was scheduled to hold a meeting with House Speaker Newt Gingrich Monday night. Last Friday, the King visited the Simon Wiesenthal Centre's Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles, the first Arab ruler to tour the exhibition. He made a speech there saying the Jordan-Israel peace treaty would "begin a new era where the enemies of yesterday become the good neighbours and friends and cousins for all time to come."

Rabbi Marvin Hier, dean of the centre, said Monday in an interview that "there is a wall-to-wall consensus in Israel that the treaty most likely to succeed in a warm peace will be the one between Israel and Jordan." "This treaty should be used as a pattern in which Israel seeks peace with its other Arab neighbours," the rabbi said, adding that both countries should be rewarded. Unlike Israel's agreement with the Palestine Liberation Organisation and negotiations with Syria, the treaty with Jordan is non-controversial in Israel and among Israel's supporters in the United States. King Hussein accompanied by Her Majesty Queen Noor, arrived in Washington, D.C., early Monday. Their Majesties were accompanied by Their Royal Highnesses Prince Ali, Hamzeh and Hashem, Prime Minister Sharif Zeid, the King's military advisor Major-General Hameid Al Fayez and Jordanian Ambassador to the U.S. Fayez Al Tarawneh. They were received at Andrew Air Base in Washington by senior State Department and White House officials as well as Arab ambassadors to the U.S.



His Majesty King Hussein and U.S. President Bill Clinton in Amman during the president's visit to Jordan on Oct. 26, 1994 (AFP photo)

## Ekeus says he failed to fill in gaps on Iraq biological data

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — U.N. disarmament chief Rolf Ekeus said Monday that he had failed during his four-day mission here to fill in the gaps in information about Iraq's germ warfare programme. He told reporters that the issue, crucial for Iraq's hopes for an easing of U.N. sanctions in force since its invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, was still unresolved. "I don't think we have concluded the issue of biological warfare as yet," said Mr. Ekeus. "Iraq may be clean but we don't know that. We haven't been completely assured."

He held final talks on Monday with General Amer Rashid, head of Iraq's Military Industrialisation Organisation. He said he had held "technical talks, and the biological area" had been the focus. "We have not concluded our work... There are still some question marks of considerable importance." His presentation to the Security Council would be factual. "It is up to the Security Council to make its judgments," said Mr. Ekeus. Mr. Ekeus reported progress on the question of chemical weapons, saying that "Iraq provided us with a new declaration changing old declarations which had been shown to be incorrect — a new, final, and complete declaration of its chemical weapons capabilities." That declaration will be reviewed in New York, he noted. Asked if his report could lead to an easing or lifting of the sanctions, Mr. Ekeus said: "We'll lay the facts on the table and it will be for the council members to interpret these facts... we hope there will be some positive action from the council."

Mr. Ekeus said there were no major problems in other weapons areas — nuclear, ballistic missiles and long-term monitoring. On monitoring, a key element in convincing the Security Council of Iraq's compliance, he said: "The mechanisms of future monitoring is in place, and we find the system of monitoring Iraq is operational." "That means all elements — monitors, individuals, cameras, sensors, aerial surveillance and so on, and the Iraqi cooperation, which is a very important component — are running in a satisfactory way." Mr. Ekeus said he had not brought up the case of two Americans sentenced to eight-year prison terms by Iraq last week for illegally crossing the border from Kuwait. Before returning to U.N. headquarters in New York, Mr. Ekeus was due to visit Kuwait to brief the emirate's rulers on the weapons monitoring in Iraq. An Iraqi newspaper said meanwhile the U.N. embargo on Iraq is running out of steam. "The United States is on the verge of playing its last cards to exert pressure for keeping up the embargo," said Al Thawra daily, mouthpiece of the ruling Baath Party. The United States backed by Britain had led the campaign against lifting the oil sanctions. But the paper said that Washington "seems to have embarked on the last round to save its chances." "Instead of prolonging this aggression, the last round will be marked by a breaking down of the remainder of this aggression."

## 800 killed in Algerian army raid — report

ALGIERS (Agencies) — (AFP) — The Algerian army has killed almost 800 militants in an offensive in the 'Ain Defla region west of Algiers, the independent newspaper Le Soir said Monday, citing what it called reliable sources. The government refused to confirm the report, which followed a report in the same paper on Sunday that up to 600 members of the hardline Islamic Armed Group (GIA) were killed during the six-day offensive after they gathered in the region for a meeting of their movement.

## Shahal: Separation plan nearly ready

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Police Minister Moshe Shahal said Monday that he would soon put forward his plan to separate the Israelis and Palestinians as a means to curb attacks. "This plan is almost ready and I hope to present it in a few days to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin," he said. He said the plan had been drawn up to "ensure the security of residents of Israel following a wave of attacks by Palestinian militants." A string of attacks by Palestinian hardliners opposed to the peace process with Israel has left dozens of Israelis dead since the launch of Palestinian self-rule in May. The aim of Mr. Shahal's plan is to step up controls and stop Palestinians entering Israel from the occupied West Bank or self-rule Gaza Strip without a special permit. "The plan was drawn up in collaboration with the army, the police, the secret services and the prime minister's advisor on anti-terrorism, and it is not based on building barriers."

Details of the plan which have already been made public include erecting fences and using sophisticated electronic methods and helicopters as well as deploying border guard patrols accompanied by police dogs. Israeli newspapers said the idea was to create "mini-security zones" along the "green-line" separating Israel and the territories it occupied in the 1967 war. But it has already come under fire from treasury officials who say it will eat up around a third of the U.S. annual military aid to Israel of \$1.8 billion. The leader of Israel's trade union federation has called for all Jewish settlers to be evacuated from the self-rule Gaza Strip, union officials said. Haim Ramon, secretary general of Histadrut, told a seminar late Sunday: "If in Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's place, I would order a total evacuation from the Gaza Strip, including 3,000 to 4,000."

## U.S.: No negotiation with Iraq

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — The White House said Monday there would be no direct negotiations with Baghdad for the release of two U.S. citizens who have been sentenced to eight years in prison for illegally entering Iraq. White House spokesman Michael McCurry said there had been no progress on U.S. efforts to free David Daliberti and William Barloon, U.S. defence contractors who strayed across Kuwait's border with Iraq on March 13. "We continue to press for their release through a variety of diplomatic measures," he said. When asked whether Washington would engage in direct negotiations with Baghdad for the two men's release, Mr. McCurry said no, and added that sanctions imposed against Iraq after the 1991 Gulf war would not be a possible bargaining chip. "These are unrelated matters," he said. The United States has rejected Iraq's charge that the two men were engaged in sabotage when they entered Iraqi territory, a move Mr. McCurry said was "an honest mistake."

## Turkish campaign in Iraq continues; Bonn to hold back \$107m grant

ANKARA (Agencies) — Turkish forces have killed 172 Kurdish separatist guerrillas and lost 17 soldiers during an incursion into northern Iraq which entered its second week on Monday, a senior military spokesman said. Ankara also faced losing a 150 million mark (\$107 million) military aid package following a decision taken by German Chancellor Helmut Kohl in protest at the offensive. Turkish Chief of Staff spokesman Colonel Dogu Silabioglu said the army conducted "control, combing and search operations" for Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) rebels across the mountainous border region. He also said 17 soldiers have been killed and 23 wounded since Ankara launched its drive to stop up to 2,800 PKK rebels from using Iraq as a base to conduct its violent campaign for an independent state in southeast Turkey. The 35,000-strong Turkish force has also captured 12 PKK guerrillas and seized 652 Kalashnikov automatic rifles, 16 mortars and 42 rocket launchers, he added at a press briefing in the southern city of Diyarbakir. Iraq's parliament speaker described the two Americans as "infiltrators."

crossing from Turkey into the security cordon which now covers 8,400 square kilometres. The Turkish Daily News said more troops and equipment were flown in to northern Iraq on Sunday to reinforce the Turkish soldiers backed by tanks and warplanes taking part in Operation Steel. Reports also said Turkish troops had pushed Kurdish rebels towards the Syrian and Iranian borders, where battles raged Monday. Battles were reported in the Khakurk region, near Iran. PKK rebels apparently have remained in the Iraqi town of Zakho just south of the border. Residents said guerrillas ambushed and killed two Kurdish village guards as a captured PKK rebel was leading them to other rebels in hiding. The army has armed Kurdish villagers opposed to the PKK and willing to cooperate. Meanwhile, Germany, shocked at suggestions that the Turkish army might remain in northern Iraq for up to a year, said it would hold up grants it had promised Ankara for the purchase of two frigates. Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel said Chancellor Kohl had agreed to make 150 mil-

lion marks (\$107 million), already budgeted for 1995 to subsidise the deal, available only if parliament specifically approved dishurting the funds. "I am shocked at comments attributed to Turkish President Suleyman Demirel that Turkish forces intend to remain in northern Iraq for a year after he personally told me last week they would pull out quickly," Mr. Kinkel told reporters. "The Turks are doing more and more damage to themselves," Mr. Kinkel said, adding that Ankara's hardheadedness would have an impact on relations with the European Union. There was no immediate clarification from the Turkish president's office of Mr. Demirel's reported comments, made to the Associated Press in an interview on Saturday. Turkish authorities have so far placed no time limit on the operation. In an interview published on Monday, Turkey's mission commander said his troops must remain in Iraq indefinitely. "There are some critical points where we could stay and must stay," Lieutenant-General Hasan Kundakci told Milliyet daily. The German government, a major supplier of military

## Syria to expel hardliners, U.S. said to inform Israel

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — The United States has informed Israel that Syria is preparing to expel Damascus-based Palestinian leaders hostile to the peace process, an Israeli foreign ministry spokesman said Sunday. "These organisations are (Syria's) negotiating cards. They themselves know that Syria will only use them until it doesn't need them anymore," one official said. Syrian Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam met recently with Palestinian opposition officials and a leader of the Lebanese Hizbollah to warn them that "their days in the Syrian capital are numbered," the daily Maariv wrote Monday. However, two Syrian-based groups — the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and Democratic Front for Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) — denied the reports as "lies."

"The reports published in Maariv are baseless, they are just lies and intrigue," said Daud Talhami, a spokesman for the two groups. "Supporters of the Oslo (autonomy) accords want to spread such news to cover up the scale of the opposition." Mr. Talhami said the vice-president met with hardliners two weeks ago but simply reaffirmed Syria's opposition to separate Arab-Israeli negotiations.

But the officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Israel itself had not noticed a change in position. "These organisations are (Syria's) negotiating cards. They themselves know that Syria will only use them until it doesn't need them anymore," one official said. Syrian Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam met recently with Palestinian opposition officials and a leader of the Lebanese Hizbollah to warn them that "their days in the Syrian capital are numbered," the daily Maariv wrote Monday. However, two Syrian-based groups — the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and Democratic Front for Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) — denied the reports as "lies."

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The privately-owned Le Soir said the army had seized hundreds of Kalashnikov assault rifles and semi-automatic as well as heavy automatic weapons coming from outside Algeria. Dozens of foreigners, including Eritreans, Tunisians, Moroccans, were among those killed. Le Soir said the Eritreans killed were believed to be members of the Eritrean People's Islamic Front. The paper said several key figures within the GIA were among those killed, but that their identities had not been revealed. The privately-owned Le Soir said Monday the army had evacuated the area of civilians and then pounded it with an artillery barrage before sending in paratroopers. An officer told the paper several hundred "terrorists" had been killed. Le Soir said the GIA had been planning a "vast-scale operation aimed at sapping the morale" of the security forces and showing that the authorities were "incapable of organising presidential elections" when it was attacked. President Liamine Zeroual, who rules Algeria with the support of the military-backed government, has promised to hold presidential elections this year and hinted Sunday that if they passed off successfully, he could also order local and national polls. Meanwhile, security officials said in a statement that Islamic extremists had shot dead Mohammed Abdul Rahmani, the editor in chief of Algerian government daily Al Mujahid, in the capital Algiers on Monday. He was assassinated as he sat in his car in a traffic jam at Oued Kniss in the eastern

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## Russia to press Egypt over NPT

CAIRO (AFP) — Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev will try to persuade Egypt to sign an unconditional extension of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) during talks here this week despite Cairo's insistence that Israel must also join the pact.

"As a major nuclear power, Russia is very interested in seeing an unlimited extension of the NPT," said Omar Al Farouq Hassan, the Egyptian Foreign Ministry official in charge of relations with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

"But we feel that to fulfil the NPT's mission, no country should be excluded from it, so that no non-nuclear country remains threatened by countries possessing this power."

Mr. Kozyrev will visit Cairo on Tuesday and Wednesday for talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

Egypt and other Arab states have demanded an Israeli commitment to join the nuclear pact.

Israel says it is threatened by nations such as Iraq, Iran and Libya and refuses to join the NPT before total peace is concluded with all the countries in the region.

Western experts say Israel has some 200 nuclear warheads.

"We will try to explain the Egyptian position to Russia," Mr. Hassan told AFP. "We are not opposed to the treaty as such but to the scope of its application, which should guarantee its universality."

Russia and the United States, co-sponsors of the Middle East peace process, support an unlimited and unconditional extension of the treaty when it comes up for discussion in April at the United Nations.

Mr. Hassan refused to say whether Mr. Kozyrev, who visits Israel after Egypt, would bring new compromise proposals to resolve the dispute.

## Tutankhamon tomb infected with fungus

CAIRO (AFP) — Scientists are fighting to save King Tutankhamon's tomb from a spreading fungus infection which threatens its decorations, an official told AFP on Saturday.

"The entire tomb of King Tutankhamon is infected with over 100,000 spots varying between one and seven millimetres in size," said Mukhtar Ammar, a professor of microbiology at Al Azhar University.

Mr. Ammar, who diagnosed the tomb's malady as an aspergillus fungus in 1987, said that a chemical sprayed on some of the spots in 1990 seems to have stopped their growth.

His team will now begin spraying the rest of boy-king's tomb in Luxor, 720 kilometres south of Cairo.

Archaeologists noticed black spots on the tomb's murals soon after Howard Carter opened it in 1922. But it was only in the late 1980s that they noticed the disease was spreading over the decorations.

"The fungus feeds on moisture in the air. After Howard opened the tomb, rain and moisture came in and with the large number of visitors it has been growing," Mr. Ammar said.

The head of the Egyptian High Antiquities Council,

It will be the first state visit to Egypt by a Russian foreign minister since the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991.

However, Mr. Kozyrev did attend the signing of the Israeli-Palestinian autonomy accords in Cairo in May 1994.

Mr. Kozyrev and Mr. Mubarak will also discuss the Arab-Israeli peace process and trade relations between Egypt and Russia.

A large delegation of Russian businessmen will accompany Mr. Kozyrev on his visit, Mr. Hassan said.

Trade between the two countries, which amounted to \$1 billion in 1991, has fallen to \$171 million, of which \$30 million represented Egyptian exports to Russia, he said.

Another senior Foreign Ministry official said Russian companies, which lacked foreign currency, "prefer to deal with Western countries rather than Egypt, which does not pay in cash."

"Egyptian exporters often fail in their commitments in terms of quality and delivery date. This has made them lose a large part of the Russian market to Asian products which have more competitive prices," he added.

Mr. Kozyrev will also discuss the case of two Egyptians fighting alongside Chechen rebels who were captured by the Russian army, the official said.

Moscow has said the two were mercenaries, while Cairo insists they were Egyptian workers drafted into the Chechen ranks.

The talks will also cover the sanctions against Iraq and Libya.

Russia supports the lifting of the U.N. embargo imposed on Iraq after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait and on Libya for refusing to extradite two of its citizens suspected in the 1988 Lockerbie airliner bombing.

Mr. Kozyrev will leave Cairo on Wednesday for Israel, Syria, Lebanon and the autonomous Palestinian territories.



MELEE ON GROUND: Egypt's Ibrahim Hassan (2) clashing with a Lebanese fan in Beirut during a friendly match on Sunday between the two countries, as Lebanese soldiers try to calm things down. The match ended in a 1-1 draw (AFP photo)

## Carter tries to achieve reconciliation in Sudan

KHARTOUM (AP) — Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter said Sunday he would push for reconciliation between the Sudan's government and rebels in the south.

Mr. Carter also said he wants to discuss the issue of "terrorism" with Sudan's government, an obstacle in the way of better U.S.-Sudanese relations.

The State Department has listed Sudan as among the countries supporting "international terrorism." General Omar Al Bashir, who installed an Islamic regime in a 1989 coup, is accused of allowing Islamic militants to train in camps near the capital.

Sudan has denied it is fostering "terrorism."

"We look forward to having a briefing on the issue of terrorism, hoping that any element of terrorism is eliminated and relations are improved," Mr. Carter said upon his arrival in Khartoum.

While in Sudan, Mr. Carter was to participate in a conference beginning Monday on Guinea worm disease. Last year, it affected at least 160,000 people in Africa and the Indian subcontinent.

Mr. Carter also said he had "ideas" for a reconciliation between Gen. Bashir's government and rebels in southern Sudan.

Mr. Carter's nine-day African tour also includes stops in Ghana, Nigeria and Kenya. Earlier Sunday, Mr. Carter said he is seeking a ceasefire in southern Sudan to enable a campaign against guinea worm disease.

Mr. Carter was speaking to journalists in Kenya before leaving for Khartoum.

The guinea worm parasite transmits river blindness disease among humans. Mr. Carter said the disease can be prevented with a single tablet of medicine.

He said guinea worm has been eradicated in most parts of the world, but nothing has been done in southern Sudan.

"There are certainly now more cases of guinea worm in southern Sudan than in all the rest of the world combined," Mr. Carter said.

The Carter Centre in Atlanta is leading efforts to eradicate guinea worm. Mr. Carter said the centre has made "tremendous progress" in many countries.

He said John Garang and Riak Machar, who head rival rebel factions in southern Sudan, had pledged in separate meetings to observe an international-supervised

## Somalis see grassroots initiatives as key to peace

MARERE, Somalia (R) — Elders in southern Somalia say only a grassroots peace campaign will avert a new threat of clan fighting and give the stability needed to start development in the war-torn Horn of Africa country.

"The problem with trying to reach a political settlement in Mogadishu (the capital) is that not every interested group is present. Some groups find it difficult to stick to agreements they are not directly party to," Maalim Omar Ali told Reuters at the weekend.

"We should start from the bottom... from villages, sub-clans, regions to clans and then to the country. Otherwise I see no immediate solution to our problems," he said.

Mr. Ali is heading exploratory talks in the desolate Marere settlement of Jubba Valley to "create access for everyone in this area to move freely, make possible co-existence among clans, in order to achieve lasting peace and stability."

Marere, until a few years ago a thriving sugar estate built with European and World Bank aid, is now a desolate ruin. Only 70 kilometres from the Indian Ocean port of Kismayu, civilians from any faction can move freely here, but armed militias are barred.

On the banks of the mango tree-lined Jubba River, youths stand guard to ensure that no armed men cross the river.

The residents of Marere are wary of travelling to Kismayu, which is controlled by warlord Mohammad Said Hersi, known as Morgan. Marere is controlled by Colonel Ahmad Omar Jess, once an ally but now a rival of Morgan.

"We are trying to solve that. Talks with Morgan's people are high on the agenda," said Mahud Hirse, another elder.

The communities in Marere, like those of neighbouring areas, are settling in after trekking back from refugee settlements in Kenya to reclaim the homesteads they abandoned in 1991.

Anarchy that followed the 1991 ouster of dictator Mohammad Siad Barre completely emptied the fertile Jubba Valley — except for a few Somalis who had no clan allegiance, elders in the area said.

The sugar factory is in ruins and the smart modern houses formerly occupied by foreign experts are wrecked. The once colourful gardens in the residential area are a sandy waste.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has flown in seeds for planting in the rainy season that has just begun, so they can grow their own food and end the dependence on food handouts, ICRC's Boris Michel said.

Mr. Michel said he had received unprecedented cooperation in the Marere region, where Somalis readily repaired and cleaned the airstrip.

The English-language Gulf Daily News on Monday quoted an Interior Ministry spokesman as saying the authorities "would not hesitate to take action against people attempting to undermine the security of Bahrain and its citizens."

An Interior Ministry statement published by local newspapers said attempts were underway to "uncover the motives for the crime." It did not name those arrested or say how many were detained.

The body of police officer Ibrahim Rashid Abdul Karim Al Saidi was found behind his car on Wednesday in Nuwaidrat village, 10 kilometres south of the capital Manama, a previous government statement said.

Nuwaidrat was the scene of anti-government protests after the arrest of a school teacher accused of inciting unrest.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Saudi official warns against sorcery

RIYADH (AP) — The deputy interior minister, remarking on the recent beheading of a man accused of witchcraft, said Sunday that sorcery was un-Islamic and unacceptable. "I do not think it is anything that should attract attention," said Deputy Interior Minister Prince Ahmad Bin Abdul Aziz, when asked about the execution while opening a ward for osteotherapy treatment. "Its existence denotes ignorance of the faith above all else, and such ignorance is not acceptable," he said, according to the official Saudi Press Agency. Interior Ministry records showed that on March 10 a Saudi was beheaded in Riyadh for sorcery practices that led to "physical and mental ailments in many persons." The records also claim he used the practice to have improper sexual relationships with several women. His Yemeni assistant and a Saudi woman who "turned her home into a den for the witchcraft" were each sentenced to seven years imprisonment, according to the records. They were also sentenced to an unspecified number of lashings.

### Israeli given suspended sentence for shooting girl

TEL AVIV (AFP) — An Israeli army officer received a six-month suspended jail sentence Sunday for shooting a Palestinian girl aged 14 two years ago in the Gaza Strip, judicial sources said. Ephraim Mushkato was found guilty of "homicide by negligence" by a court in Lod near Tel Aviv over the death of Aida Abed Rabbo. The girl who was on her doorstep in the village of Bani Subeila near Gaza City, was killed by bullets fired by Major Mushkato as he chased youths who had been throwing stones at the Israelis. The court found that Maj. Mushkato had failed to shout out a warning before shooting as required by army regulations but the judges opted for a light sentence because of his "impeccable" military record.

### Zhirinovskiy praises people's regime in Libya

CAIRO (AP) — Russian ultranationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy condemned U.N. sanctions against Libya and said his country could learn from Muammar Qadhafi's rule. Mr. Zhirinovskiy, who once presided over a dictatorship as a solution to Russia's problems, praised Colonel Qadhafi's "authority of the people," in which popular committees run the government. "The visit will also enhance and deepen bonds and relations between us in all economic, political and cultural fields," said Mr. Zhirinovskiy on arriving Saturday night in Tripoli, Libya. His statement was carried Sunday by Libya's Jamahiriya News Agency. Mr. Zhirinovskiy met Sunday with Col. Qadhafi and urged the U.N. Security Council to lift 3-year-old sanctions against Libya. He declared his support for Col. Qadhafi in "confronting the unjust measures imposed on it by the Western countries through the so-called Security Council."

### Saudi-Yemeni committee to meet in April

SANAA (R) — A joint committee of Saudi and Yemeni military officials will hold their second round of talks on settling a long-standing border dispute between the two countries in April, a Yemen government newspaper said on Monday. Al Thawra newspaper quoted Yemen's parliamentary Speaker Sheikh Abdullahi Ben Hussein Al Ahmar as saying the joint military committee would hold its next round of talks in Sanaa on April 3. They held their first meeting in Riyadh last week. Sheikh Ahmar was the leader of the Yemeni side in negotiations with Saudi Arabia in February which concluded with the signing of a memorandum to end their 60-year-old border row.

### Velayati meets with Chinese host

BEIJING (AFP) — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati met his Chinese counterpart Qian Qichen here Monday, with both officials urging a further strengthening of friendly bilateral ties and economic exchanges. "The Chinese government attaches great importance to developing its relations with Iran and wishes to further such a relationship," Xinhua quoted Qian as telling his guest, who arrived in China Monday for a three-day visit. Mr. Qian highlighted in particular China's satisfaction with expanding bilateral economic and trade relations, expressing the hope that an eighth meeting of a Sino-Iranian committee on such cooperation would lead to the further growth of such ties.

## Suspects held in killing of Bahrain policeman

MANAMA (Agencies) — Bahrain said on Monday a number of people suspected of killing a Bahraini policeman last week had been arrested.

An Interior Ministry statement published by local newspapers said attempts were underway to "uncover the motives for the crime." It did not name those arrested or say how many were detained.

The body of police officer Ibrahim Rashid Abdul Karim Al Saidi was found behind his car on Wednesday in Nuwaidrat village, 10 kilometres south of the capital Manama, a previous government statement said.

Nuwaidrat was the scene of anti-government protests after the arrest of a school teacher accused of inciting unrest.

The English-language Gulf Daily News on Monday quoted an Interior Ministry spokesman as saying the authorities "would not hesitate to take action against people attempting to undermine the security of Bahrain and its citizens."

An Interior Ministry statement published by local newspapers said attempts were underway to "uncover the motives for the crime." It did not name those arrested or say how many were detained.

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Nuwaidrat was the scene of anti-government protests after the arrest of a school teacher accused of inciting unrest.

**JORDAN TELEVISION**  
Tel: 77311-19

**PROGRAMME TWO**  
17:00 Le Prince El La Strene  
17:30 Pyramide  
18:00 Tour Du Monde Tour Du Ciel  
19:00 News in French  
19:30 The Bold and the Beautiful  
19:45 Faut Pas Rêver  
20:30 Home Improvement  
21:30 The Nature of Things  
22:00 News in English  
22:30 Seafarth

**PRAYER TIMES**  
06:06 Fajr  
06:26 (Sunrise) Duha  
11:41 Dhur  
15:11 Asr  
17:56 Maghreb  
19:14 Isha

**CHURCHES**  
St. Mary of Nazareth Church  
Swedieh, Tel. 810740  
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 637440  
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440  
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757  
Terresanta Church Tel. 622566  
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 632541  
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331  
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 772661  
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751  
Assyrian International Church Tel. 652526  
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328  
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195  
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654232  
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691  
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

**WEATHER**  
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.  
Temperatures will continue to rise gradually becoming around average with winds southeasterly light to moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly active and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.  
Amman ..... 3/18  
Aqaba ..... 10/25  
Dahab ..... 1/19  
Jordan Valley ..... 9/24

Yesterday's high temperatures:  
Amman 15, Aqaba 23, Humidity readings: Amman 47 per cent, Aqaba 37 per cent.

**JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR**

**USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS**  
**NIGHT DUTY**  
AMMAN:  
Dr. Fakhri Tayeh ..... 885880  
Dr. Youssef Al Faqih ..... 759988  
Dr. Bassim Qaddumi ..... 648633  
Dr. Youssef Abdo ..... 694916  
Fires pharmacy ..... 651912  
Fires pharmacy ..... 733336  
Al Asema pharmacy ..... 637055  
Nairoba pharmacy ..... 623672  
Al Salan pharmacy ..... 636730  
Yaacoub pharmacy ..... 644945  
Shneikani pharmacy ..... 637660  
Nairoba pharmacy ..... 623672  
Najib pharmacy ..... 847632

**EMERGENCIES**  
Food Control Centre ..... 637111  
Civil Defence Department ..... 661111  
Civil Defence Immediate ..... 617101  
Fire Brigade ..... 617101  
Rescue ..... 630341  
Civil Defence Emergency ..... 199  
Fire Brigade 192, 631111, 637777  
Blood Bank ..... 617101  
Highway Police ..... 843402  
Traffic Police ..... 896390  
Public Security Department ..... 63021  
Hotel Complaints ..... 605800  
Price Complaints ..... 661176  
Water and Sewerage ..... 897467  
Complaints ..... 897467  
Amman Municipality ..... 787111  
Telephone Information (directory assistance) ..... 121  
Overseas Calls ..... 010230  
Central Amman Telephone ..... 623101  
Abdell Telephone Repairs ..... 661101  
Jordan Television ..... 773111  
Radio Jordan ..... 774111  
Water Authority ..... 680100  
Jordan Electricity Authority ..... 815615

**HOSPITALS**  
AMMAN:  
Hammam Medical Centre 813813/32  
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn. 644281/6  
Akhik Maternity, J. Amn. 642412/2  
Jabal Amman Maternity ..... 642362  
Malhas, J. Amman ..... 636140  
Palestine, Shmeisani ..... 664171/4  
Shmeisani Hospital ..... 669131  
University Hospital ..... 658485  
BURD:  
The Islamic, Abdali ..... 666127/37  
Al-Ahli, Abdali ..... 664164/6  
Italian, Al-Muhajreen ..... 777101/3  
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh ..... 775111/26  
Army, Marfa ..... 891611/15  
Queen Alia Hospital ..... 686100  
Amal Hospital ..... 674155

ZARQA:  
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323  
Zarqa National Hospital (09)905660  
Rou Sina Hospital ..... (09)986732  
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)999990  
Princess Beqaa Hospital ..... (02)275555  
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272775  
In Al Nafes Hospital ..... (02)247100  
AQABA:  
Princess Hays Hospital (03)314111

**FOR THE TRAVELLER**  
**QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**  
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)53300. 5, where it should always be verified.

**ARRIVALS**  
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)  
04:00 Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)  
07:30 ..... Damascus (RJ)  
09:15 ..... Aqaba (RJ)  
09:25 ..... Abu Dhabi (RJ)  
09:35 ..... Muscat, Dubai (RJ)  
10:15 ..... Doha, Bahrain (RJ)  
16:35 ..... London (RJ)  
16:45 ..... Frankfurt (RJ)  
16:50 ..... Cairo (RJ)  
17:30 ..... Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)

**DEPARTURES**  
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)  
07:00 ..... Aqaba (RJ)  
08:15 ..... Amsterdam, New York (RJ)  
11:00 ..... Montreal, Toronto (RJ)  
11:05 ..... Vienna, Brussels (RJ)  
11:35 ..... Geneva, Madrid (RJ)  
11:45 ..... Frankfurt (RJ)  
12:40 ..... London (RJ)  
12:45 ..... Cairo (RJ)  
20:05 ..... Larnaca (RJ)  
21:25 ..... Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)  
22:10 ..... Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)

**Other Flights (Terminal 2)**  
05:30 ..... Vienna (OS)  
13:20 ..... Rome (AZ)  
14:05 ..... Munich (YP)  
20:00 ..... Aden (DY)  
20:20 ..... Beirut (ME)  
23:20 ..... Amsterdam (KL)  
23:55 ..... Bucharest (RO)

**MARKET PRICES**  
Upper/lower price in fil per kg.  
Apple ..... 700/300  
Banana ..... 600  
Banana (Mukammara) ..... 620  
Cabbage ..... 120/70  
Carrot ..... 190/80  
Cauliflower ..... 220/140  
Cucumbers (large) ..... 150/100  
Cucumbers (small) ..... 280/130  
Eggplant ..... 100/50  
Garlic ..... 1200/800  
Green beans ..... 200/150  
Lemon ..... 380/220  
Marrow (large) ..... 150/100  
Marrow (small) ..... 150/100  
Onion (green) ..... 240/140  
Onion (dry) ..... 220/240  
Orange ..... 500/400  
Pass ..... 500/400  
Pepper (hot) ..... 400/320  
Pepper (sweet) ..... 280/180  
Potato ..... 300/200  
Spinach ..... 200/100  
String Beans ..... 400/300  
Tomato ..... 520/320

**HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN**  
Dep. Amman 8:00 every Monday  
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday  
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday  
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

**MARKET PRICES**  
Upper/lower price in fil per kg.  
Apple ..... 700/300  
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Banana (Mukammara) ..... 620  
Cabbage ..... 120/70  
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Tomato ..... 520/320





His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein Monday receives an honorary masters degree in military sciences from the Commander of the Royal War College (Petra photo)

## Prince Abdullah receives honorary masters degree in military sciences

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein, the Regent, Monday received an honorary masters degree in military sciences from the Royal War College in appreciation of his efforts to develop the Jordan Armed Forces.

The degree was presented to the Prince during a meeting Monday at the Royal Court with the Commander of the Royal War College and members of its steering panel.

Prince Abdullah voiced his appreciation of the college's role in upgrading the efficiency of the Armed Forces officers.

The commander of the college delivered an address at the meeting in which he thanked Prince Abdullah for his continued support of the military's training institutes, particularly the war college, and his keenness to introduce modern military technologies to these institutions.

The meeting was attended by Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid, His Royal Highness Prince Ghazi Ben Mohammad who is the cultural secretary of His Majesty King Hussein and the King's advisor Mohammad Rasoul Al Kilani.

Prince Abdullah, the eldest son of King Hussein, was born in Amman Jan. 30, 1962. He started his education at the Islamic College in Amman, which he attended until 1966. He entered St. Edmund's School in Surrey, England and later attended Deerfield Academy in the United States, where he completed his high school education.

In 1980, Prince Abdullah joined the Royal Academy of Sandhurst in England where he received his military education.

The Prince joined Oxford University for a year, starting in October 1983, for special studies in international politics and world affairs.

From August 1987 to May 1988, he attended the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.

In January 1993, Prince Abdullah was promoted to full colonel and is currently commander of the Jordanian Special Forces.

He has participated in several training courses in artillery and various small arms. He has also served with the Jordanian Special Forces in airborne and anti-terrorist activities.

Prince Abdullah is also a paratrooper.

## U.S. motion picture group reviews Jordanian laws

AMMAN (AP) — Jordan has assured the American Motion Picture Association that the Kingdom will tighten and enforce legislation to protect all copyrights and intellectual property rights, a Jordanian businessman said Monday.

The pledge was conveyed to Jeff Hardey, vice-president of the association, and Nathan Knight, a lawyer, during talks here, said Murad Bushnaq, the head of a local company that coordinated the two Americans' visit.

Messrs. Knight and Hardey met with Minister of Culture Samir Habashneh and senior officials from the ministries of Trade and Information as well as representatives of the private sector. Mr. Bushnaq told the Associated Press.

"They were assured that Jordan is seriously working on further tightening its laws related to copyrights and intellectual property rights, and new legislation will be enacted before the end of the year," Mr. Bushnaq said.

He said the visitors were "highly impressed with the assurance," and that the American Motion Picture Association intended to enter the Jordanian market ahead of the new legislation so as not to "leave a vacuum" when the laws are enforced.

No official was immediately available for comment.

Messrs. Knight and Hardey left for Cairo early Monday.

The U.S. administration has been pressing Jordan to tighten its laws on copyrights and intellectual property rights, saying strict legislation was a prerequisite to encourage American firms to do business in Jordan.

Pirate copies of computer software and videotaped American films are abundant in the Jordanian market, most of them originating in the Gulf states, which are notorious for piracy of copyrights and intellectual property rights.

Businessmen estimate the piracy business in Jordan at about \$30 million a year, only a tiny fraction of the multi-billion-dollar turnover in pirated products in the Gulf and the Far East.

Jordan enacted an amended version of a 1952 law on copyrights and intellectual property rights in 1992.

Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb told U.S. Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown on Feb. 8 that the government was drafting new laws to make Jordanian legislation on copyrights and intellectual property rights at par with international conventions.

## Jordan ready to help Yemen in education arena

AMMAN (Petra) — Acting Prime Minister and Education Minister Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh on Monday expressed Jordan's readiness to help Yemen in educational fields by providing the Yemeni education ministry with Jordanian expertise in the fields of comprehensive education, teacher training and developing curricula and school textbooks.

At a meeting with a Yemeni delegation headed by Deputy Education Minister Abdul Fattah Jamal, Mr. Rawabdeh stressed Jordan's keenness to enhance relations with Yemen.

He said educational achievements accomplished in Jordan were the main reason for success achieved in political, social and economic fields.

Mr. Rawabdeh underlined the importance of opening new scopes of cooperation between Jordan and Yemen and called for adding to the educational and cultural protocol signed between the two countries new articles that would bolster educational ties and pave the way for enhancing the values of Arab unity.

Mr. Jamal commended educational ties between the two countries and stressed his ministry's eagerness to benefit from Jordan's experience in developing the educational process.

He also lauded the performance of educational institutions in the Kingdom.

The Yemeni delegation was also received by the secretary general of the ministry of education who briefed its members on the national educational development plan and the main problems facing it.

The delegation also visited the ministry's training centre where its director, Mahmoud Massad, presented a briefing on the centre's programmes and plans.



Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Education Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh Monday reviews prospects of assisting Yemen with its educational needs with visiting Yemeni Deputy Minister of Education Abdul Fattah Jamal (Petra photo)

## Senior EIB official to arrive for talks

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The vice-president of the European Investment Bank, the monetary arm of the European Union (EU), Arian Obolenski, will pay a two-day visit beginning Wednesday for a review of EIB-financed programmes and future projects in Jordan, officials and diplomats said Monday.

They said Ms. Obolenski was scheduled to meet with Minister of Planning Rima Khalaf and other senior officials at the ministry on Wednesday.

Nabil Sweis of the Ministry of Planning said Ms. Obolenski was also scheduled to visit "sites of projects that are financed by EIB and in the process of being financed by the bank."

The EIB vice-president will also review projects resulting from the Middle East peace process as well as "potential future projects," Mr. Sweis told the Jordan Times.

Ministry of Finance figures show that Jordan has received JD 108 million in EIB loans since the signing of the first protocol between the Kingdom and the European Commission, the executive arm of the EU, in late 70s.

The current protocol — covering 1993 to 1996 — calls for 126 million European Currency Units (ECU) (about \$150 million) in loans and grants to Jordan. The EIB handles the loan part — 80 million ECU (\$96 million) and the European Commission the rest in grants.

Mr. Sweis as well as European diplomats said most of the funds envisaged in the protocol were already committed.

## Princess Basma to chair follow-up meeting on Cairo population conference

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Wednesday will chair the national symposium, a follow-up meeting to the Cairo Conference on Population and Development.

The symposium, organised by the Jordan Family Planning and Protection Society, will focus mainly on the objectives and principles adopted at the Cairo conference as well as discuss the new orientations of the International Union for Family Planning.

It will also discuss the role of the national media in raising public awareness of the recommendations adopted at the Cairo conference.

On Sunday, Princess Basma returned home from New York where she participated in the preparatory meetings for the World Conference on Women which will be held in Beijing in September.

Princess Basma called for the need to find a mechanism to implement the international draft plan of action prepared for the Beijing conference.

In another meeting held on the sidelines of the conference, and chaired by Princess Basma, participants agreed to form an Arab committee to coordinate stands concerning the international plan of action.

Upon her invitation, the participating group in the New York meetings will attend another meeting in Amman that will be held on May 18 to discuss the best ways to put this mechanism into action.

The Jordanian delegation presented a plan of action that included 37 amendments to the international plan of action based on the United Nations treaty on eliminating all kinds of discrimination against women, combating illiteracy, combating violence against women, and promoting women in decision-making posts.

The amendments were drawn in light of dominant traditions and values in every society.



AMMAN (Petra) — Recent rains have increased dam waters in various parts of the Kingdom by 700,000 cubic metres, thus raising reserves to 90,646 million cubic metres (mcm), sources at the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) said Monday.

The sources said the King Talal Dam currently holds 68.4 mcm, about 91.1 per cent of its total capacity.

They said the Wadi Arab Dam holds 15.4 mcm, or 89.8 per cent of capacity, Sharhabil dam has 3.7 mcm, equalling 78.8 per cent of capacity, Al Kafrein dam 2.4 mcm, or 98.1 of capacity and the Wadi Shu'eib dam holds about 1.4 mcm, or 98.1 per cent of its capacity.

The sources said these water reserves were relatively good and would contribute to an extent in meeting the agricultural needs in the Jordan Valley along with quantities which will be pumped from the Yarmouk River in accordance with the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty.

Meanwhile, figures released by the Meteorology Department Monday showed that Kufir Assad, near Irbid, received the highest amounts of rainfall since Sunday morning until Monday 8 a.m. with 7.5 millimetres.

It was followed by the Queen Alia International Airport area which received 5.7 mm.

The department said temperatures will continue to rise as a result of a high air pressure covering the entire Mediterranean region.

It said the rise in temperatures will continue until Wednesday when temperatures were expected to be higher than the annual average for this time of year.

## Dams clear 90% capacity with unusual recent rainfall

AMMAN (Petra) — Recent rains have increased dam waters in various parts of the Kingdom by 700,000 cubic metres, thus raising reserves to 90,646 million cubic metres (mcm), sources at the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) said Monday.

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## Housewives more likely to suffer stress than working women — private study

By Beatrix Immenkamp Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Housewives are more likely than working women to suffer from stress and stress-induced health problems, according to the preliminary research data of a study conducted by the Middle East Centre for Human Studies.

"Given that almost 90 per cent of all Jordanian women of working age are housewives, the high level of physical complaints related to stress among housewives is particularly worrying," Dr. Jost Salem-Pickartz, director of the centre, told the Jordan Times. About forty per cent of housewives included in this study said they suffered these physical complaints.

According to the findings of British and American research in health psychology, the physical and psychological well-being of mothers is one of the most important factors influencing a child's development and healthy growth.

The study, "Coping With Stress Under Various Conditions: An Example of Jordanian Women," focused on three sections of the female population: Single working women, working mothers and housewives with children under the age of five.

Ninety per cent of the 500 participants in the study ranged in age between 20 and 40 years, and 70 per cent had children under the age of six.

Working women were approached through a questionnaire, while the housewives were interviewed.

In general, the study found that the higher the woman's level of education, the more likely she was to be working outside the home, even if she had children.

Among the housewives, 28 per cent had obtained the Tawjihi-degree, 20 per cent had been to college and 18 per cent had graduated from university.

Among working mothers, an equal percentage had obtained the Tawjihi, but 39 per cent had been to college and 22 graduated from university.

For single working women, figures ranged from 31 per cent holding the Tawjihi-degree, 41 per cent going to college to 13 per cent graduating from university.

The study, which was conducted in the latter half of 1994, found that housewives were more likely than their working counterparts to have experienced chronic distress within the last two years, as well as acute distress over the last six months.

They were also more likely to suffer from different psychosomatic complaints that are frequently associated with long-term subjective stress, such as skin problems, breathing problems, low or high blood pressure, headaches or migraines, back pain, sleeping problems, eating problems as well as problems with digestion.

Chronic stress factors most frequently experienced by all three groups of women were ongoing financial problems, too many social obligations, and too many responsibilities at home.

Continuous dissatisfaction with everyday life was another common cause of distress. Other factors ranged from ongoing marital discord, problems with family, in-laws and neighbours, unemployment, health problems of family members, including the woman herself, to water shortages and lack of space.

All three groups of women identified health problems in the family and financial problems as the most common stress factors over the last six months.

For housewives, incidences of marital discord, trouble with in-laws and husband's unemployment more frequently caused stress than among working women.

The most frequent health problems shared by all women in this study were headaches and migraines and problems related to blood pressure.

Whereas an equal percentage of working and non-working women complained of having to cope with moderate levels of stress, housewives complained more frequently of experiencing extreme levels of stress.

The Middle East Centre for Human Studies, which was founded in October 1994, conducted the study in cooperation with institutions that either employ women and others which have women as clients. As the study was privately commissioned, the centre was unable to release the names of the institutions in the study.

According to Dr. Salem-Pickartz, the study does not yet represent a picture of women in Jordan as a whole, since the sample was limited.

"The next step would be to make the study more representative, by including random samples of women from all walks of life," Dr. Salem-Pickartz said.

She added that additional research should be done on the women's general life situations, methods they have devised to cope with stress, and who they turn to with their medical problems.

The Middle East Centre for Human Studies, a private institution combining the expertise of professionals in the areas of psychology, sociology, social research, education, health, communication, management and administration, conducts multi-disciplinary research.

Upon completion of the research stage, intervention strategies will be proposed by the centre to the institutions involved, aiming to reduce levels of stress for working and non-working women and proposing ways for them to cope with it, said Dr. Salem-Pickartz.

### HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

**Royal Decree approves government job listing**

AMMAN (Petra) — A Royal Decree was issued Monday approving the 1995 government departments' personnel system which will take effect July 1. The number of jobs listed in the system stands at 121,115, reflecting an increase of 2,564 over 1994. Ministries and government departments have asked to fill 10,000 vacant posts. A total of 1,700 new jobs were created at the Ministry of Education, 750 at the Ministry of Health, 120 at the Ministry of Justice, 1,750 at the Civil Defence and Public Security Departments and the rest at other government departments.

**Armed forces chief visits PSD**

AMMAN (Petra) — Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Abdul Hafez Marai Kaabneh Monday visited the Public Security Department (PSD) and met with its director, lieutenant General Abdul Rahman Adwan. Gen. Kaabneh, accompanied on the visit by the chief of staff of the land forces, the commander of the air force, the inspector general and senior army officers, was briefed on the PSD's command and control projects.

**Parliamentarians stress peace on European visit**

AMMAN (Petra) — A Jordanian parliamentary team, on a current visit to Europe, expressed Jordan's keenness on pursuing peace that will help solve economic and social problems. In a meeting with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the head of the Jordanian team, Deputy Abdul Hadi Majali, said Jordan is keen on implementing the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty and hopes progress will be achieved on all Arab-Israeli tracks. He said Jordan aspires to solve most of its economic and social problems when peace prevails. Mr. Majali said Jordan hopes to enhance cooperation with Germany and the European Union, especially in terms of launching joint projects in the different fields that would help alleviate unemployment and upgrade the living standards of people in the Kingdom.

### WHAT'S GOING ON

**AMERICA WEEK (AQABA) EXHIBITIONS**

★ Mingo Saldívar Y Sus Tremendos Cantros Espadas Conjuntos/Country Group at the Aqaba Gulf Hotel, Aqaba at 6:00 p.m. (the week includes exhibits and paper-shows featuring the USA, video programmes and electronic dialogue).

**SECOND ANMAN DRAMA FESTIVAL**

Plays (in Arabic) entitled "Umm Al Khosh" and "The Eyes of Maria and Stubbah" respectively at 7:00 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. at the Royal Cultural Centre.

★ Exhibition of oil paintings by Hamoud Chantout at the Balqa Art Gallery, Fuhls.

★ Exhibition of oil paintings by Yusef Badawi at Alia Art Gallery.

★ Exhibition of art by Ahmad Al Babili and Mohammad Ali at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art.

★ Exhibition of books dealing with Arab and Islamic subjects at Instituto Cervantes (the Spanish Cultural Centre).



## Russian jets bomb refugee camps in southeast Chechnya

SERZHEN YURT, Russia (AFP) — Russian warplanes bombed refugee camps in separatist-held southeast Chechnya Monday, killing several people, witnesses said.

The planes attacked the camps on the outskirts of Serzhen Yurt, destroying a number of small houses crammed by refugees, including many children, an AFP correspondent reported.

Witnesses said more than two people had been killed and others badly wounded, but exact figures were not immediately available.

About 15 former holiday camps transformed into refugee centres are strung out along the Kinkhulay River that runs through Serzhen Yurt, just outside the Chechen-held town of Shali.

Residents estimated 1,000 refugees from the three-and-a-half month old war lived in the camps.

More than four planes fired rockets and dropped bombs at several of the camps, witnesses said.

At one camp, a row of small houses was badly damaged and one house was blown apart.

In one of the small houses, home to several elderly peo-

ple and five children, an unexploded bomb appeared to have ripped through the roof and floor and embedded itself below the house.

"Look how many children there are here," said Djabrail Elbi, a 65-year-old refugee from Shali, pointing to the youngsters, who were about six years and wore cast-off, oversized overcoats.

"Yeltsin is the Moscow hand," Elbi shouted, referring to the Russian president and prime minister.

"There are only refugees here, there are absolutely no (separatist) fighters at all," said Malik Yussop, a 25-year-old refugee from Argun.

She said there had been no ground fire aimed at the planes, one of which buzzed the village earlier in the day, to provoke the attack.

"Even if we had wanted to shoot at the planes, we couldn't have. There wasn't even time to know where they were coming from," Yussop said.

Two people were badly injured in her camp. They did not make it to the basement in time and were hit by shrapnel, she said.

The refugee camp was

once used by the Soviet youth corps, the Pioneers, and by tourists for summer holidays. A life-sized Soviet-era statue of a boy and girl sitting on a bench looking at the river emerged unscathed in the attack.

Tens of thousands of Russian troops, backed by tanks, artillery, planes and helicopters, entered Chechnya on Dec. 11 to crush the separatist administration declared three years earlier by President Dzhokhar Dudayev.

Russia is unlikely to establish full control over Chechnya anytime soon, the head of an international team of monitors that visited the breakaway republic said Monday.

Hungarian diplomat Istvan Gyarmati, leader of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) team that visited Chechnya last week, added that even if control were reestablished, the political rift between Moscow and the secessionists in Chechnya would still exist.

He said he was against sending an international peacekeeping force to quell the fighting.

"Everything must be resolved through political nego-

tations," he said.

Mr. Gyarmati, whose country took over the presidency of the OSCE in December, said the OSCE hopes to open a permanent office in Grozny next month to monitor the human rights situation.

He said Moscow has agreed in principle to the idea and discussions to that effect were to continue with authorities here Monday.

Mr. Gyarmati at the weekend accused Russian troops of widespread human rights violations in Chechnya including rape and arbitrary arrests.

He said that although both sides in the Chechen war were responsible for human rights violations, the Russian violations were on a larger scale as a result of their continued raids on Chechen positions.

"That could be explained by the fact that it's a war situation, but that can't be used as an excuse by Russian authorities who must control the army," he said.

Several other international bodies, including the European Union and the International Red Cross, have recently accused Russian forces of violating human rights in Chechnya.



U.S. first lady Hillary Clinton (left) smiles with Pakistani Prime Minister Bhutto at a luncheon in her honour at the prime minister's house, in Islamabad. Mrs. Bhutto described Mrs. Clinton as a "symbol for women throughout the world" (AFP photo)

## Mrs. Clinton urges bigger role for women

LAHORE, Pakistan (R) — U.S. first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, on the second day of an extensive goodwill mission, urged gender-conscious South Asia Monday to give women a greater role.

Speaking at the Lahore University of Management Sciences, a famed business school in Pakistan, the wife of U.S. President Bill Clinton said: "If women don't thrive, the world won't thrive."

The first lady's message stated the theme of her 32,000-kilometre trip to five of the world's poorest countries: improving the lives of women and children by giving them more education, health care and opportunity is a global social necessity. She is visiting Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bangladesh and

Sri Lanka in 12 days.

"Investing in the health and education of women and girls is essential to achieving global prosperity. We have seen in parts of Asia and South America that the education of girls can help lift whole populations out of poverty," she said.

"Investing in human capital, building the human infrastructure and enhancing human productivity ought to be our common concern," she said.

Mrs. Clinton, accompanied on her trip by her 15-year-old daughter, Chelsea, delivered the speech after touring a clinic and school for girls and visiting a family in a village 20 kilometres from Lahore.

She showed a sense of humour about the controversy surrounding her

effort to expand the traditional role of U.S. first ladies when a student asked her if she had a nickname.

"My nickname? Well, it depends on who you talk to," she said. "Some people, I would imagine, have quite rude nicknames for me."

Before leaving Islamabad earlier Monday, Mrs. Clinton conducted a seminar with more than a dozen young women at a college for girls on the problems of women in the modern world.

For nearly an hour, she and the students talked about how to mix careers and marriage, the importance of education and the raising of children.

Later Monday, Mrs. Clinton arrived in Lahore Monday from Islamabad on the second day of her visit to Pakistan.

## Former head of Gucci dynasty shot dead in Milan

MILAN (R) — Maurizio Gucci, former chairman of the Gucci luxury leather goods and fashion dynasty, was shot dead outside his office in Milan Monday, police said.

They said a man in his 30s fired on the 45-year-old millionaire with a pistol fitted with a silencer at about 9 a.m. (0800 GMT), hitting him three times in the face.

A guard at the building, on Via Palestro in central Milan, was hit in the shoulder but was not seriously injured. The killer drove away in a car, a police spokesman said.

Police said the attack could be the work of a professional hit man but the motive was not immediately clear.

Maurizio Gucci was the last grandson of the firm's founder, Guccio Gucci, to be involved with the company whose products became a byword for casual elegance and also harsh consumption.

He sold his 50 per cent stake in the business to the London-based Arath investment bank Investcorp for a sum reported to be between \$150 million and \$200 million in 1993 after an acrimonious boardroom battle, and gave

up the chairmanship.

Maurizio's cousins Roberto, Paolo and Giorgio sold their half to Investcorp in 1987 after an internal feud that earned the Florentine family comparisons with the mediaeval Medici dynasty from the same city.

The company said it was shocked by Monday's killing but would not be issuing an official statement.

"The death of Maurizio is a blow but I would like to stress that relations between Maurizio and the Gucci company ended in 1993," a company spokeswoman in Milan said.

Maurizio Gucci, whose official residence was the Swiss mountain resort of St. Moritz, had recently set up his own company, Verser, at the office where he was killed.

His companion, Paola, rushed to the scene in tears after learning of his death on the radio, witnesses said.

The Gucci empire, whose red and green motif and linked GG gilt logo appeared on thousands of franchised products, grew into a jet-setter's favourite from its humble origins in 1906 at a saddlery shop in Florence.

## Kaelin returns to witness stand in Simpson trial

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The O.J. Simpson whom the Rev. Jesse Jackson saw over the weekend was nothing like his TV image: The well-dressed, under-control Simpson who passes notes to his attorneys, grimaces at questions he doesn't like and smiles at Kato's jokes.

Instead, Rev. Jackson described a sorrowful inmate, yearning for just one more conversation with Nicole Brown Simpson.

"It's just a sense of sorrow," Rev. Jackson said after emerging from the jail Sunday. "There's no sense of arrogance. There's a sense of contrition, a sense of sorrow."

Rev. Jackson said Simpson was brought to the point of tears during their meeting, which lasted slightly more than an hour.

"He said he thought about the last time that he talked to his ex-wife and how he's always longing for one more conversation," Rev. Jackson said.

Simpson is on trial in the June 12 knife slayings of Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ronald Goldman.

Asked if he believes Simpson is guilty, Rev. Jackson declined to comment.

Rev. Jackson said Simpson had asked his lawyers to arrange the meeting, and that he also wanted to talk to the families of the victims while he was in Los Angeles.

"Everybody's a victim —

his children, Ron Goldman and Nicole. O.J. is a suffering victim," Rev. Jackson said.

"They are all losers. There are no winners."

Brian "Kato" Kaelin, the one-time Simpson house guest, was expected back on the stand Monday, followed by Mr. Kaelin's friend Rachel Ferrara, who has corroborated his account of hearing three thumps on his guest room wall at the Simpson estate while talking to her on the phone.

The main spectacle of the anti-nuclear movement focuses on nuclear energy, a so-called information leak originating from a "secret" European Union report, the statement said.

"The events of 1936 cannot recur. No technical grounds were stated because more than \$300 million has been invested in safety at Chernobyl. This is a gimmick to put pressure on Ukraine."

The Observer, quoting a report it said was suppressed by European Union officials,

said pillars supporting Chernobyl's stricken fourth reactor were "in imminent danger of bursting."

It said such a collapse could send debris crashing through a containment shell hurriedly erected around the reactor in 1986 or into the adjacent third reactor, still in operation.

The fire and explosion in the fourth reactor on April 26, 1986 sent radiation over most of Europe and Ukrainian officials say 8,000 people have since died as a result. More than 10 per cent of the national budget is still devoted to the cleanup.

Ukraine's five nuclear power stations provide more than a third of the country's electricity. The industry has increased salaries to prevent a mass departure of specialists and statistics showed a decline in technical incidents last year.

But international experts have said the continued op-

eration of Chernobyl's first and third reactors is unsafe and Western nations have been pressing for its closure. Reactor No. 2 was closed after a fire in 1991.

Ukrainian leaders say they cannot shut Chernobyl until alternative sources are found for the seven per cent of the country's electricity provided by the plant. They say between \$4 billion and \$6 billion in assistance is needed.

Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma visited the station this month and said it was up to the international community to work out a plan to close Chernobyl, taking account of the former Soviet republic's economic crisis.

Industrialised countries have offered several hundred million dollars in assistance to help close the station. But the EU last week made the provision of general financial aid contingent on a deal to shut Chernobyl.

Chernobyl boss denounces disaster report

Rolling Stones see no end to their run

MELBOURNE (R) — Billed as the world's oldest rock and roll band, the Rolling Stones think they've still got a bit more life in them yet. Speaking at the start of the Australian leg of their World Voodoo Lounge Tour, the four remaining members of the five-man band that formed way back in 1962 say no end in sight. "We're looking at people offering us shows for 1996 at the moment," lead singer Mick Jagger told a packed news conference Sunday. But although the sprightly Jagger, an exercise fanatic, looked as if he could make the distance, the years seem to be taking their toll on his fellow band members who began the current tour in Washington in August last year. Guitarist Keith Richards, looking haggard, maybe from Saturday's flight to Melbourne from Tokyo, did not remove his sunglasses during the 25 minute indoor conference. He has boasted in recent weeks that during the Stones' last tour to Australia in 1973 he was on acid the entire time and did not remember anything about the country. "There are the old gaps," said Richards Sunday, dressed in his trademark black. The band is expected to make \$26 million from ticket sales alone from their seven Australian concerts at Sydney, Melbourne, Perth, Adelaide and Brisbane and up to \$265 million from the 24 country, 12 month Voodoo Lounge Tour which will be seen by 6.1 million people.

Thousands of dollars blow across highway

BOSTON (AP) — It wasn't pennies from heaven. It was dollars. Thousands of dollars. "There's money blowing all over the place," a passing motorist told police. Bills littered both sides of the four-lane McLean Highway in a mixed commercial-residential corner of East Boston, said Sgt. William Fleming of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. Officers recovered \$7,870 in \$100, \$50, \$20 and \$10 bills. They have no idea how much was pocketed by passers-by. No one had called to claim the money by Saturday morning, officer Jim Browning said. No one had turned in any more cash, either.

Excitement mounts over 67th annual Oscar awards

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — The film industry was buzzing before the Oscar presentations, with Forrest Gump, Pulp Fiction and The Shawshank Redemption vying for top honours.

"This has become one of the most eagerly anticipated contests the movie industry has seen in a long, long time," said Art Manteris, bookmaker at the Las Vegas Hilton.

The votes for the 67th presentation of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences have been in since Tuesday, but were being kept secret until the envelope opening ceremonies here Monday.

Most observers expect Forrest Gump, the story of an Alabama simpleton, who makes good as he charges through life armed with innocent optimism, to dominate the awards.

The film entered the presentations with 13 nominations, a feat that ties it with Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf (1966) and places it just behind All About Eve (1950) with 14.

Best film, best actor and best director are among the nominations garnered by Gump, which also has picked up several Golden Globe Awards.

Gump captured the imagination of filmgoers as well as earning \$550 million worldwide. It reportedly earned star Tom Hanks and director Robert Zemeckis roughly \$35 million each.

But it might not be such a sure bet Monday, according to the odds makers.

Lenny Del Genio, 600-line director with Billy's Las Vegas, told AFP that the film was at even money to win the Oscar.

The Shawshank Redemption, the fictitious story of a unjustly jailed banker, which got seven nominations in-

cluding best actor, is also at even money, Del Genio said.

Manteris saw the competition as tight, but he said the race was between Forrest Gump and Pulp Fiction. The former picked 2-1 odds and the latter 3-1, by Manteris' calculations.

Monday night might also feature real-life comeback stories of the kind so often celebrated in Tinseltown productions.

First there's Woody Allen,



U.S. actors John Travolta (left) and Samuel L. Jackson, stars of the film Pulp Fiction, practice as presenters during rehearsals for the 67th Academy Awards. Travolta has been nominated for best actor and Jackson for best supporting actor for their Pulp Fiction roles (AFP photo)

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again the toast of the industry, the gloom of his recent past seemingly behind him.

"Seven nominations, this is the Academy's way of saying all is forgotten," said Damien Bona, author of Inside Oscar, the behind-the-scenes book on the annual awards bestowed by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

John Travolta, who is up for best actor with his performance in Pulp Fiction, could be the second comeback kid.

Saturday Night Fever (1977) pushed him into superstardom when he played a Brooklyn disco king, but Travolta's career began to sag in the 1980s with a string of lackluster appearances.

Travolta reclaimed a measure of his fame in the early '90s with the Look Who's Talking series, but films superimposing his voice over baby actors left him far below his former glory.

All that turned around practically overnight after Travolta sunk his teeth into Pulp. Landing the Oscar would be the icing on the cake for him.

Monday might even hold some solace for non-Americans weary of the deluge of U.S. films bombarding their theatres. Oscar statuettes could go to British, French, Russian, and Cuban films among others.

Mr. Madness of King George a brief biography of the British monarch who permanently lost the U.S. colonies and temporarily lost his mind, could bring Britain's Nigel Hawthorne an Oscar for best actor and compatriot Helen Mirren the award for best supporting actress.

Four Weddings And A Funeral, the farcical British look at yuppies coming to terms with their biological timeclocks, has also been nominated for best picture.

## Burma leader: Army must stay strong

RANGOON (Agencies) — Burma's military government Monday celebrated its 50th armed forces day with the commander in chief calling for a strong army that can keep fighting to safeguard Burma's independence and sovereignty.

General Than Shwe, who is also Burma's prime minister and chairman of the ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), made the comments in an address to about 4,500 troops and guests in Rangoon's Resistance Park.

Thousands of people lined streets around the park from soon after dawn to watch a military parade and hang garlands of jasmine around the necks of 3,300 singing soldiers, airmen and sailors as they marched past the Golden Shwedagon Pagoda into the park.

The troops joined 1,500 invited guests, including about two dozen foreign military attaches, to hear Gen. Than Shwe's speech commemorating the military's "anti-fascist resistance" of 1945.

"Just as the Tatmadaw (army), in concert with the people, regained the nation's independence, it is also duty-bound to continue to preserve independence and sovereignty," Gen. Than Shwe said in a 40-minute speech under a blazing morning sun.

"With the changing situation in the international arena today, it is essential to remain ever vigilant and safeguard independence and sovereignty. Therefore it has become necessary to build up the Tatmadaw to be modern and strong."

Burma's armed forces have in recent years been expanded to some 300,000 men,

equipped with arms from China and elsewhere.

Speaking at the same spot as independence hero General Aung San did when he rallied the troops against a Japanese army of occupation 50 years ago, Gen. Than Shwe also said the army and the SLORC must play a key political role in Burma.

"To this day, our Tatmadaw, as is the SLORC, is still discharging the duties of the state," he said. "In essence, the Tatmadaw should be able to participate, with general goodwill, in the national political leadership role of the future of Myanmar."

Myanmar is the name the SLORC, formed in 1988, gave to Burma following the brutal suppression of nationwide pro-democracy protests that left thousands dead or imprisoned.

Ironically Burma's most prominent political prisoner is the daughter of independence martyr Aung San, and lives under house arrest just a few kilometres from where Gen. Than Shwe spoke.

Despite urgings from abroad, Nobel Peace Prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi is still detained at her house on the shore of Rangoon's Inya Lake where she has been held since 1989.

Ms. Suu Kyi, who had two highly-publicised meetings with top SLORC officials late last year, has said her release must be unconditional and she will not make any secret deal with the SLORC in exchange for her freedom.

Rumours were swirling in diplomatic and media circles that Ms. Suu Kyi, 49, might be released to mark Armed Forces Day. But although SLORC earlier this month freed two leading dissidents it has not said when Mr. Suu Kyi will be released.

On Sunday 2,874 prisoners were released after the government announced it was reducing by one third the sentences of 23,901 convicts in honour of Armed Forces Day.

During his speech Gen. Than Shwe said the SLORC was working on reconciling ethnic differences in Burma, and it wants to make peace with different armed rebel groups.

"There are 14 armed national groups which have realised the Tatmadaw has always left its door open to welcome the remaining armed groups."

"I would like to confirm here once again that the Tatmadaw is always welcoming the armed groups in the jungles," he said.

Burmese junta troops were bracing Monday for an attack on the border town of Tachilek by troops of drug warlord Khun Sa, Thai officials said.

Burmese border guards sealed off the town Sunday, closing the Tachilek border checkpoint with Thailand's Mae Sai district, a centre of trade in the area, an official with the Mae Sai district chief's office said.

By early Monday, no reason had been given for the closure, though the Thai official said it was assumed that the Burmese were anticipating a raid by the Maung Thai Army (MTA), the insurgent force loyal to opium warlord Khun Sa.

A week ago, an MTA strike team infiltrated Tachilek and launched a surprise raid on government positions with rockets and machine guns, killing at least three Burmese troops according to Radio Rangoon, and five civilians according to London-based human rights group Amnesty International.

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The corpses of three Burundian Hutus lay in a street of the capital Bujumbura following fierce armed clashes between the Tutsi-dominated army and ethnic Hutus (AFP photo)

## Burundis president warns of genocide

**BUJUMBURA (AFP)** — Burundi's President Sylvestre Ntibantunganya warned Monday the country was on the brink of genocide after a week of ethnic bloodshed claimed scores of lives and thousands fled the capital.

"It's too calm," a local journalist said after some humanitarian agencies estimated that 500 people were killed in the Bujumbura district of Bujumbura as Tutsi-led troops allegedly carried out "ethnic cleansing" against Hutus.

"It's the beginning of genocide," Mr. Ntibantunganya told Belgian radio by telephone. He stated that Burundi was undergoing "a period of destabilisation which could extend beyond its borders."

The president estimated that 150 people were killed as troops went into the Buyenzi district overnight Friday in an operation to crack down on extremist militias, but Hutu residents said a massacre had taken place.

Mr. Ntibantunganya declared that "the (Hutu) victims are ethnically targeted and the perpetrators are from another ethnic group (Tutsi)" and demanded international "political action" to "denounce extremist forces."

A trickle of Hutu refugees headed Monday into exile in Zaire, carrying belongings and with their bedding on their heads, but there were no longer the tens of thousands who left in the past few days.

Some 23,500 Bujumbura residents, around half of them Zairean nationals, have fled to Zaire since Friday, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said Monday.

But Mutiti Wa Bassara, responsible for relief matters in the Zairean prime minister's office, put the total at 35,000, stating that the government had a "different appreciation of the situation" because a large number of refugees had not yet been registered.

UNHCR spokesman Peter Kessler Monday said the Uvira region, where two new refugee camps have been set up, had already taken in some 110,000 refugees from Burundi and Rwanda.

Many foreigners living in Burundi, particularly French people and nationals of the former colonial power, Belgium, said they were preparing for their "Easter holidays", in what several admitted was an evacuation.

"Burundi is finished," an elderly Greek shopkeeper said after spending 32 years in the central African highland nation.

Apart from sporadic shooting, the city was quiet overnight, even in the northern Kinama and Kamenge districts where remaining Hutus said they feared attacks by Tutsi militias backed by the army.

The district administrator in Kinama, a Hutu, said he was convinced that "a policy of ethnic cleansing" had been implemented. "We are at war," he added. "Anything is possible in light of what has happened."

Burundi has to be watched very carefully to avoid a catastrophe similar to that in neighbouring Rwanda last year, the president told RTBF radio. Between 500,000 and a million people are believed to have been massacred there by Hutu extremists.



Burundian refugees carry all their belongings as they cross the border into neighbouring Zaire following fierce armed clashes between the Tutsi-dominated army and ethnic Hutus in the capital Bujumbura (AFP photo)

## Japan police find end cult underground room

**KAMIKU ISSHIKI, Japan (R)** — Japanese police searching buildings owned by a donmsday sect Monday found a second secret underground room which they said was probably used for confining dissident followers.

The room was square, made of concrete and nine square metres in area and about four metres (13 ft) deep. There was a single wooden chair and a large pool of water on the floor.

Some former members of the cult, called the Aum Shinri Kyn (Supreme Truth Sect) have alleged torture took place within the cult, but a police official said there was no evidence the room was used for torture.

Last Wednesday, police arrested five sect officials, including three physicians, for illegally confining people. They also rescued six people held against their will.

One of those rescued told police she saw sect doctors

give intravenous injections and pills to people wanting to leave. Another follower told the Yomiuri Shimbun he had witnessed people being buried on grounds owned by the sect.

The police official said they were continuing to search the more than 20 buildings in the sprawling compound for other possible underground rooms.

The raids of the sect's complex at the village of Kamiku Isshiki, 100 kilometres west of Tokyo, started Wednesday, two days after nerve gas attacks on Tokyo subway trains during the morning rush hour killed 10 people and injured 5,000.

The raid has entered a new phase since Sunday when authorities announced they were seeking evidence the cult had been making deadly chemicals with intent to kill.

Until Saturday, the raids were based on an abduction charge. But now the charge against it is murder preparation.

"— used against anyone preparing weapons or poisonous materials with intent to murder."

Police analysis showed residue from three chemical samples—from the complex, the subways and the site of another poisoning in Japan last July — was methylphosphine acid disopropyl and related substances, Japanese media reported.

The chemical is a by-product of the deadly nerve gas sarin, identified as the agent in the three cases.

The analysis showed that the same people produced the three samples using an identical method, according to the news reports, which police have not confirmed.

Also Monday, police broke into a secret chemical laboratory they had uncovered. However, they did not reveal details of their investigation.

They seemed to be continuing Sunday's focus on a cluster of buildings called "Seventh Satian" (Sanskrit for truth) — the name the

cult gives to one of several clusters of buildings at its sprawling complex in Kamiku Isshiki.

On Monday, about 40 officers — five wearing heavy chemical warfare outfits — carried cutting and lighting equipment and caged canaries into Seventh Satian.

Meanwhile a Moscow court Monday suspended the activities of the Japanese cult Aum Supreme Truth and decided to temporarily freeze the assets of the group, suspected of perpetrating the nerve gas attack on the Tokyo underground a week ago.

The sect, which has six centres in Moscow and counts several thousand local followers, was also banned from teaching, Judge Irina Vorobyeva told AFP.

She said the court decided to suspend the group following reports on Russian television in which the cult's leader, Shokun Asahara, called on followers to defend him and commit collective suicide.

## Governments urged to act over global warming

**LONDON (R)** — While scientists argue about global warming theory, interest groups and lobbyists say it is time to stop talking and act.

"Action must be taken now in order to stabilise the climate and prevent catastrophic changes in our environment," says Earthaction, a pressure group made up of citizens' groups in 127 countries.

Delegates from more than 100 countries meet in Berlin from March 28 to April 7 to discuss progress on the framework convention on climate change, signed in Rio De Janeiro in 1992.

The U.N.-sponsored meeting will discuss progress made in curbing the growth of pollutants such as carbon dioxide, said to be the main cause of global warming and the "greenhouse effect."

Those who believe in the greenhouse effect say carbon emissions from power stations and cars will cause the world to warm up, melting the Earth's caps and submerging low-lying areas. Climate patterns would be disrupted and food production hit.

Some groups have been disappointed by progress on cutting CO2 emissions since the Rio agreement. They say governments' fine words have not been matched by action.

In the three years since they signed the climate change treaty, the world's governments have failed to respond effectively to the threat of climate change," said an article in the current issue of the U.S. magazine World Watch.

The belief that little has been done to match the Rio target — that carbon dioxide emissions should be stabilised at their 1990 level by the year 2000 — was recently underlined in a report by Paris based consultancy DRI.

"It is also clear... that none of the Western European countries even approaches stabilising its emissions, with the growth in energy-related CO2 emissions tending to accelerate after the year 2000," said DRI's European Energy Service.

The DRI report said energy-related CO2 emissions in Europe will increase by 6.4 per cent between 1990 and 2000, and by a further 15 per cent between 2000 and 2015.

Experts say that North American and Japan, among industrialised nations, have shown little interest in action to curb the gases said to global warming.

Earthaction has published a six point programme to cut pollution, which says nations should:

- Steadily phase out fossil fuels — replacing them with renewable energy like wind, solar, and hydro power.
- Discourage private cars and trucks in favour of public transport.
- Set minimum standards for energy efficiency.

— Halt construction of power stations without an environmental test.

— Offer development assistance to encourage renewable energy.

— Halt deforestation.

Environmental group Greenpeace believes the summit will make progress, but warns big business might seek to dilute action.

"Some companies will be seeking action to protect the environment," said Greenpeace negotiator Bill Hare, "but major oil, car and chemical companies will have lobbyists there, and they have close links to OPEC and the energy lobby."

And if action is not forthcoming, environmental lobbyists believe they have a powerful trump card to play.

They say energy companies could be vulnerable to lawsuits seeking compensation for wilful damage to the environment, similar to action in the U.S. against tobacco firms.

## Bosnian troops launch fierce attack on Serb-held Majevica

**BELGRADE (AFP)** — Bosnian army troops launched a fierce attack Monday on Serb positions in the mountainous Majevica region in northeast Bosnia-Herzegovina, raining shells on the area, the Bosnian Serb News Agency (SRNA) reported.

The Bosnian Serb News Agency said more than 300 shells fell on the region after the offensive began at 0600 GMT, with the Banja Brdo sectors and the Stolice telecommunications relay station taking the brunt of the attack.

The agency said the Bosnian Serb troops managed to maintain their positions and had inflicted heavy losses on the mainly Muslim Bosnian troops who began offensives in northeast and central Bosnia early last week.

SRNA said more than 200 Bosnian soldiers had been killed and several hundred injured since the operation began.

It said that fighting was also continuing on Mount Vlasica in central Bosnia. Local Serb military sources in that region were quoted by the agency as saying that Serb troops were set to crush Muslim troops along that front.

The U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) Monday warned it would call for air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs if they struck at civilians in U.N.-declared safe areas.

The "deliberate targeting of civilians will not be tolerated without response on our part," UNPROFOR spokesman Colum Murphy said here, following a Serb attack over the weekend on the Muslim-held eastern enclave of Gorazde, one of six U.N.-declared safe areas in Bosnia.

Some 15 civilians were injured in the shelling Saturday amid rising tension throughout the country triggered by a government offensive, launched at the start of the week in the centre and northeast of the country.

Speaking of the U.N. mandate adopted in the spring of 1993 for the defence of Bosnia's safe areas — Bihać, Gorazde, Sarajevo, Srebrenica, Tuzla and Zepa — Mr. Murphy admitted that "instructions to UNPROFOR on the ground are less than clear."

But this, he said, "allowed greater discretion" to the U.N. commander on the ground.

And attacks that deliberately targeted civilians in the safe areas "will meet a resolute response, including the use of air power if necessary against the appropriate weapons systems."

UNPROFOR decided for "political reasons" not to call in an air strike following the attack on Gorazde, but the Serbs should beware that present warnings were not "hol-

low threats," he added.

"Peace like the snows of Bosnia is melting" and "events are pushing us towards a more general war" with the much-abused four-month truce due to end in five weeks," Mr. Murphy said.

"We cannot hold off the parties indefinitely and we cannot work in a political vacuum," he added, referring to lack of progress in peace talks to end the three-year-old war.

"Events are sliding out of control and our worst fears could become reality in the not too distant future," he said.

His comments came as members of the international "contact group" on Bosnia — Britain, France, Germany, Russia and the United States — were meeting in London in a bid to rescue the peace plan from the diplomatic quagmire it settled into after Bosnian Serbs rejected it last summer.

In another development, Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic has called on the United Nations and the four great powers to stop the government offensive, which Monday entered its second week, the Bosnian Serb News Agency reported.

"We ask you... to use your influence to put a stop to the Muslim offensive and ensure the retreat of Muslim forces to the demarcation lines"

fixed by the ceasefire of Dec. 24, Mr. Karadzic said in a letter to U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali.

"If Muslim forces do not give up the threat of war, a large-scale war could break out," he warned.

A week of bloody clashes has allowed government forces to seize a number of strategic positions in central and northeast Bosnia.

UNPROFOR military spokesman Major Hervé Gourmelon said early reports suggested government forces had seized 40 to 50 square kilometres of territory in the Vlasica Mountain area of central Bosnia and the same to the northeast of Tuzla.

Following the attack, Mr. Karadzic Sunday ordered a general mobilisation of his forces who currently control 70 per cent of the country.

Mr. Murphy also condemned the Bosnian government for its ongoing offensive, terming it "provocative." And he warned that the U.N. would not be "manipulated" into defending a safe-area if government forces nudged the Serbs into attacking it.

The five-nation "contact group" on Bosnia Monday pondered ways of restarting peace negotiations, as Bosnian negotiator David Owen warned of a "much nastier, much bloodier" confrontation to come.

## Winnie Mandela sacked

**CAPE TOWN, South Africa (AP)** — President Nelson Mandela fired his estranged wife, Winnie, from his government Monday following weeks of embarrassing controversy and calls for her ouster.

The sacking rids Mr. Mandela's cabinet of a rebellious and divisive figure who publicly criticised his conservative economic policies. It does not affect Mrs. Mandela's standing in the African National Congress or her position as a member of parliament.

A somber Mr. Mandela told a packed news conference he was relieving his wife of her duties as deputy cabinet minister of arts, culture, science and technology.

"This decision has been taken both in the interests of good government and to ensure the highest standards of discipline among leading officers in the government of national unity," Mr. Mandela said.

"I hope this decision will help the former deputy minister to review her position and seek to improve on her own conduct in positions of responsibility," he said.

Immediately after the news conference, an eight-line letter from Mr. Mandela was delivered to Mrs. Mandela's office informing her of the decision. Her spokesman, Alan Reynolds, said he told her of the letter in a telephone call.

"I have decided to terminate your appointment... with immediate effect," Mr. Mandela said in the letter. "Thank you for the services you rendered to the government so far."

Firing his wife marks the most dramatic act Mr. Mandela, 76, has performed since coming to office almost a year ago in South Africa's first all-race elections.

Mrs. Mandela has defiantly criticised the government's approach to social reform, made an unauthorised trip abroad, split the ranks of the African National Congress Women's League, and most recently, been accused by police of bribe-taking and influence peddling.

Mrs. Mandela's name and popularity as a long-persecuted, high-profile militant popular among poor blacks gave her a far bigger role in the country's politics than her minor cabinet post signified.

Mr. Mandela said the decision followed "much reflection" and added his wife had "in the past played an important role in the struggle against apartheid."

"I appointed the cabinet and it is my right to reshuffle the cabinet if I consider it necessary," Mr. Mandela said. He named a human rights lawyer, Brigitte Mabandla, to replace Mrs. Mabandla but made no other changes.

## French campaign nastiness prompts call by Juppe for truce

**PARIS (R)** — An angry duel between French presidential election front-runner, Paris Mayor Jacques Chirac, and fellow conservative Prime Minister, Edouard Balladur prompted truce calls Monday.

"Balladur bites," the daily Liberation said in a front-page headline after the premier abandoned his usual docility to brand Mr. Chirac a demagogic professional of politics during a weekend rally.

"I found his comments very aggressive and I regret them," Mr. Chirac told France 3 Television Sunday about his Gaullist rival, who has dropped from favourite to fighting for second place with Socialist Lionel Jospin less than a month ahead of the April 23 first-round ballot. "I hope it was a slip."

"Perhaps a professional's quality is to control his temper," Foreign Minister Alain Juppe, Mr. Chirac's chief aide, said.

"We don't need amateurs these days," he added in a jibe mocking the premier's new drive to go down-market to shed an image of a haughty, wealthy patrician.

"Balladur climbs on tables at his rallies, sometimes eats mutton with his fingers and even goes hitch-hiking. It's not very natural," he told France 2 Television.

Mr. Juppe said the fight had gone too far and called for a ceasefire in order to "bring the campaign back from abuse to ideas" in the run-up to the April 23-May 7 two-stage poll.

But Mr. Balladur's spokesman, Budget Minister Nicolas Sarkozy, returned to the offensive Monday, accusing the premier's rivals of talking "nonsense" by making wild campaign promises.

Asked if he was targeting Mr. Chirac, he replied, "By promising to raise all spending and cut all taxes, yes."

"We have set ourselves a tremendous challenge, to win with the ambition of considering French electors as responsible beings," he said.

Mr. Chirac rejected Mr. Balladur's call for a televised debate, saying he had been "brutally knocked back into the ropes" when he first asked for it when Balladur was ahead in the polls.

"I believe it's a bit too late now... today everybody knows the (candidates) platforms," he said.

Mr. Jospin also attacked Mr. Chirac, staking out his own political turf by ridiculing Mr. Chirac's efforts to attract left-wing votes with promises of social justice.

He said the Paris mayor, a former right-wing prime minister, now posed as an opponent of Balladur to build up his lead.

"There is a candidate... who is trying to say that he no longer belongs on the right, who wants to erase the left-right divide," he told France 2 Television. "Voters need to know who is who, where we come from and what we stand for."

All three leading candidates come from the elite ENA civil service school, but Mr. Jospin said he had never ceased fighting for social justice and equality since his days as a student.

"Chirac has not been identified with that kind of thing in his political career... was he ever seen in a demonstration, in a strike?" he asked.

## Berlusconi fights to reassert leadership

**ROME (R)** — Silvio Berlusconi sought to reassert his leadership of the centre right Monday following talk that his primacy was under attack a year after his lightning general election victory.

Signs that the media mogul was being challenged for supremacy by hard-right leader Gianfranco Fini, once regarded as his most trustworthy ally, surfaced on the first anniversary of the billinaire

businessman's triumph last March 27.

Mr. Berlusconi was expected to use a rally of his self-built Forza Italia Party in Milan to repeat the battle cry for a snap election that he has been hammering since he resigned as prime minister last December.

Newspapers quoted Mr. Berlusconi as saying reports of waning prominence in his Freedom Alliance coalition with Mr. Fini's National

Alliance and smaller parties was unfounded.

"I see that... the agents of disinformation are at work giving credence to the fairy story that I'm no longer leader of the Freedom Alliance," Mr. Berlusconi was quoted as saying.

Mr. Fini, a clean-cut 43-year-old one of Italy's sharpest politicians, has been identified in several recent polls as more popular than Mr. Berlusconi.

## U.K. Conservatives back party leader

**LONDON (R)** — The government closed ranks Monday behind the embattled chairman of Britain's ruling Conservatives and tried to quash speculation that Prime Minister John Major's job could soon be on the line.

Barely a week goes by without the boathouse atmosphere of Westminster, the seat of parliament, breeding whispering campaigns against one minister or another.

But politicians said the parlous performance of the Conservatives, who are failing to narrow the opposition Labour Party's 35 per cent poll lead despite sparkling economic news, meant the latest speculation had to be taken seriously.

The media's favourite scapegoat in the event of an expected trouncing for the Conservatives in May's local elections is party Chairman Jeremy Hanley.

The Times newspaper said Monday Mr. Major had already decided to get rid of gaffe-prone Hanley, who sits in the cabinet as minister without portfolio, in a summer reshuffle to prepare for

the next general election, which must be held by May 1997.

But a senior government official said the report was wrong.

"The prime minister has full confidence in all members of his cabinet and indeed in all his ministers," the official said. "I haven't heard the word 'reshuffle'... this year."

Environment Secretary John Gummer also leapt to Mr. Hanley's defence. "Mr. Hanley is an excellent chairman of the party and he has been appointed to be chairman of the party for a long time and that is what he will be doing," he said.

Mr. Gummer was speaking at a news conference on the May local elections against a background of poll predictions that the Conservatives could lose over 1,000 of the 3,728 seats at stake.

It is forebodings of such a massacre that have fuelled speculation that Mr. Major could face a challenge when, under Conservative Party rules, he submits himself for re-election as leader at the start of the parliamentary

year in November.

Labour leader Tony Blair mischievously fanned the flames last week by saying that panicked Conservatives might dump Mr. Major in favour of Trade Secretary Michael Heseltine.

Conservative malcontents just failed to muster enough votes last year to mount a challenge — a candidate must be backed by 10 per cent of the party's members of parliament — but Defence Secretary Malcolm Rifkind acknowledged Sunday that a challenge this autumn was possible.

"It is always possible you'll get some very foolish individual backbencher who might put himself up just as... a stalking horse. But I don't think it will be very significant," Mr. Rifkind told BBC Radio.

An obscure MP flushed out the first opponents to Mr. Major's predecessor, Margaret Thatcher, by standing as a "stalking horse" challenger in 1989. A year later Lady Thatcher quit.



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### Turkey must silence the guns

NOW THAT Turkey has demonstrated its determination to eliminate the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) by invading northern Iraq, the world should demand that Ankara show resolve in settling this explosive problem by peaceful means. The plight of Turkey's Kurds cannot be addressed simply by making a deep incursion into Iraq. There are about 12 million Turkish Kurds who still await a meaningful initiative from the Turkish government. The late President Turgut Ozal was heading into the direction of offering the Kurds within his country a measure of autonomy that would have enabled them to realise some of their demands and spare Turkey the agony of costly conflict. That bold step was short-lived, though, because of Ozal's sudden death two years ago. Whether Ankara views its Kurdish citizens as a separate people or just a minority, they are still entitled to some basic rights that have yet to be attained. Surely no one condones the PKK and its terrorist actions. But there is considerable worldwide support for the Kurds' national yearnings. As long as the territorial integrity of Turkey can be safeguarded, the sky is the limit as to how far the Turkish Republic can go to meet the demands of the Kurds within its borders. The only effective way to resolve the Kurdish threat to Turkey's security and stability is to start immediate negotiations with moderate Kurdish leaders, especially with Kurdish members of parliament who are now in Turkish jails. It is bad enough that Ankara found it necessary to trespass into the territory of a neighbouring country. Had the north of Iraq been under the control of the central Iraqi government, Turkey's action would have led to a wider conflict. To prolong the stay of Turkish troops across the Iraqi borders would be a repetition of the Israeli occupation of South Lebanon. And what if the Kurdish rebels chose to hide in the mountains of Syria or Iran? Would that then widen the scope of the conflict?

As long as Ankara professes its respect for Iraq's territorial integrity, there is every reason to expect Turkey to withdraw as soon as possible from northern Iraq and instead start a genuine effort at real reconciliation within its own borders. It is high time that Turkish leaders recognised that Kurdish demands and aspirations are legitimate ones and that dialogue is less expensive and more effective a tool to end the bloodshed and the misery of the peoples.

### ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily said in its editorial Monday that His Majesty King Hussein summarised Jordan's battle for peace in one phrase, saying this battle against the enemies of peace is but a struggle against poverty, unemployment and social discrimination. The paper said triumph over these destructive factors is a victory for life, for the coming generations and the right of people in the Middle East to security, education, bread, medicine and other basic needs. It said the King's address to the World Affairs Council in Los Angeles did not only stress the values of peace, but also dealt with the need to have the international community shoulder its responsibilities in protecting this peace. It is certain that people would not be convinced of the feasibility of peace if it did not make their lives change and their conditions improve, said the paper. It said the many forces that worked for establishing peace in the Middle East are invited now before its too late to shoulder their responsibilities towards parties involved in the peace process, particularly those who suffered of aggression, invasion and occupation, and to convince them that prosperity comes from peace, not from fighting. If these forces did not progress at the moment to shoulder their responsibilities, all the forces of extremism, despair and terrorism will take a leading position and succeed in ruling this newborn peace before it gets stronger and becomes able to resist, added the newspaper.

AL DUSTOUR Arabic daily dealt in its editorial with His Majesty King Hussein's meeting with President Bill Clinton, which was scheduled to be held Monday, saying the meeting comes at a time when there are intensified contacts between Congress members and the American administration. It said there is no doubt that Jordanian-American relations, which retrieved some of their previous warmth, would rank high at the meeting, particularly that there are declared American pledges to Jordan that should be honoured after Jordan made peace with Israel. In addition to the American pledge to meet Jordan's defence needs and help the Kingdom economically, there were pledges made repeatedly by the American president and the secretary of state to write off Jordan's debts to the U.S. and urge other creditor countries to follow suit. The paper said the two leaders were also to discuss means of achieving progress on other track of the Arab-Israeli negotiations.

### The View from Fourth Circle

## Euro-racism and anti-semitism: An Arab perspective

By Rami G. Khouri

I WAS privileged last week to participate in a European Media Forum Against Racism and Intolerance, organised in Strasbourg by the Council of Europe as part of its launch of the European Week of Action Against Racism. The gathering revealed two important aspects of this troubling phenomenon: The spread of racist and intolerant actions in Europe, and the obvious will of the majority of Europeans to fight against this ancient scourge.

From our perspective in the geographical and ideological centre of the Arab-Islamic World, European racism raises a series of questions that need to be fully aired in order for us to play a more effective role in three important dynamics:

a) identifying the full historical roots of European racism,  
b) clarifying the relationships between traditional anti-semitism against Jews and contemporary political and moral violence against Jews and Muslims, and, c) working with Europeans to counter the much wider "international, transnational and civilisational consequences of Euro-racism, xenophobia and intolerance, which far transcend the acts of violence or exclusion that are suffered by individuals or small groups within Europe.

The most troubling and glaring aspect of Euro-racism is not its sudden resurgence, but its long and recurring historical antecedents. From our perspective, contemporary European racism against Blacks, Muslims, Arabs, Turks, Asians and other non-white, non-Christian "others" is difficult to separate from the centuries-long tradition of European colonialism and imperialism — a tradition that saw European powers between the 15th and 19th centuries physically conquer and economically exploit virtually the entire southern lands of Africa, Asia and the Americas. The intellectual, economic, moral and geo-political roots of modern European racism are deeply embedded in the continent's history. But history is not a static force; the dominant post-imperial and post-colonial European majority today argues passionately for a political ethic that is tolerant and inclusive, and institutes laws to back up its claims. This week, as a mosque was bombed in Germany, a leading American neo-Nazi was arrested in Denmark. Our challenge in the Arab-Islamic World is to connect with this prevailing European ethic that seeks to defeat racism and anti-semitism, to fortify it, and to work with it to remove the lingering aftershocks of historical bouts of European intolerance, victimisation and exclusion.

We have two major, inter-connected entry points into this issue. The first is traditional European anti-semitism, which is the long and ugly practice of singling out Jews as scapegoats for European problems — a tradition that is

well documented in France, Spain, Italy, Russia and other places, and that reached its height in the Nazi Holocaust.

European anti-semitism, especially the Dreyfus affair in France in the late 19th century, was a major reason for the birth of political Zionism and the formation of the state of Israel, which in turn have been the leading causes of the Arab-Israeli conflict. This conflict has generated the most serious disagreements, suspicions and confrontations between Arabs, on the one hand, and Europeans and Americans, on the other; these have subsequently fuelled anti-Western Arab nationalist and Islamist sentiments, alongside counter-fears of Arabs and Muslims in Europe and the United States, and violence by both sides against the other.

The great historical tragedy and irony is that we now witness genuine, comprehensive anti-semitism in Europe, where violence and racism are being practised by a small minority of Europeans against all the semites — not just Jews, but also Arabs, Turks, Muslims and others who trace their physical or religious lineage to the Jewish offspring of Noah's son Shem. Intra-semitic solidarity requires us to work with the Jews and Europeans to achieve a full appreciation of all the victims of anti-semitism.

Our second entry point into the debate on European racism revolves not around the discrimination or exclusion suffered by non-European individuals, but around larger scale confrontations and fears between entire countries, cultures and civilisations. The fact that NATO and the United States secretary of defence, for example, should both speak publicly about the potential threat of militant Islam to Western or Middle Eastern societies, at a time when NATO, the United States and other Western entities have rather calmly acquiesced in the contemporary pogrom against over a quarter of a million Muslims in central and eastern Europe, leads many thoughtful commentators in our region to speak of a "new Crusade" by the West against Islam.

One wonders what the West would have done if, say, thirty thousand Jewish women were raped in Russia or Turkey, as Muslim women were raped in Bosnia and its environs since 1991? If coming to grips with racism is important, which it is, it also seems important to the Arab-Islamic World for the West to come to grips with the following blatant double standard: Why does the West find it compelling to assist Kurds in northern Iraq or Christians in southern Sudan — good deeds, to be sure — but the same West prohibits Islamic states from offering aid to the besieged Muslims of Bosnia? Is this racism, moral insolvency, or just fatigue, or what?

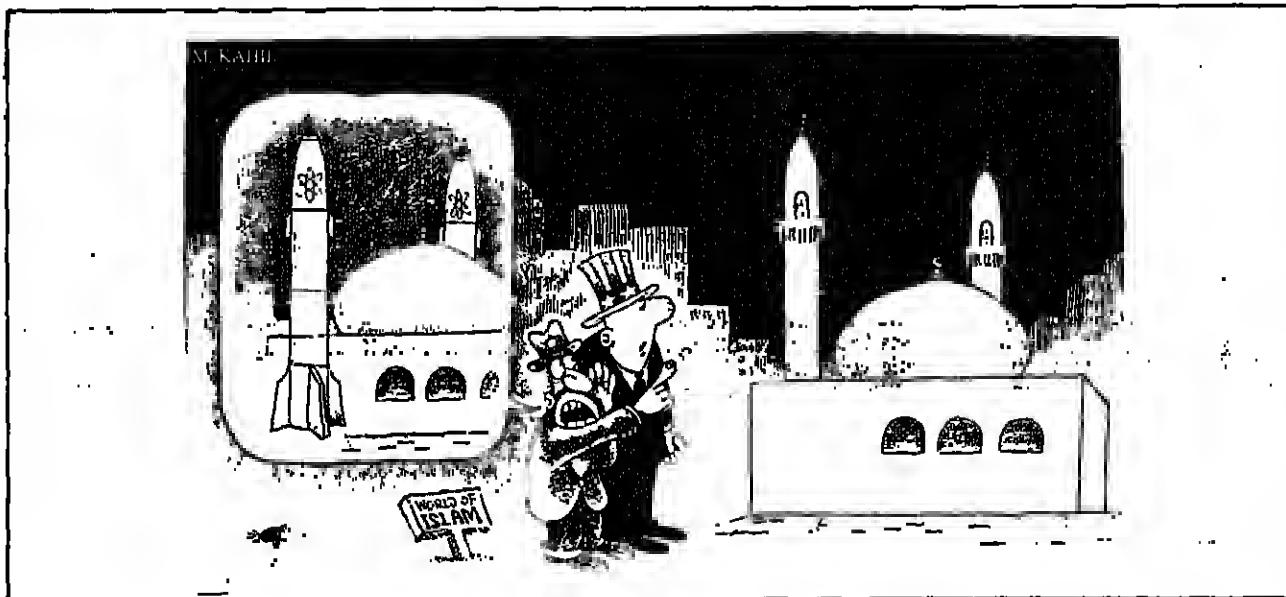
These budding geo-political or even civilisational con-

frontations are aggravated by the spectacle of Western nuclear double standards that see the West actively participate in the provision of nuclear technology to North Korea and other East Asian states, but fervently deny it to Iran, Iraq, Pakistan and other Arab-Islamic states. A similar Western double standard on democratisation also generates Arab-Islamic anger; most of us in this region view it as overtly racist for the West to promote democracy in places such as the former Soviet Union, while accepting anti-democratic slippage in most Arab states as culturally inevitable.

These trends have several negative consequences, other than deepening the Arab-Islamic perception of the West's prevailing political ideology as little more than a modern version of the same old racist, imperial and colonial attitudes of centuries past. They fortify the same Islamist militancy that the West claims to fear; they increase the likelihood of Arab-Islamic violence against the West, and Western racism and violence against Arabs/Muslims; they heighten strains between Christians, Muslims and Jews in the Middle East itself, where these three communities had generally lived in impressive tolerance, coexistence and mutual cooperation for many centuries, until the intrusion of Western colonial interests; and, they aggravate domestic social tensions and political/economic instability in Arab-Islamic countries, thereby further fuelling the rise of Islamist militancy as the most attractive — often the only available — alternative to the prevailing cycle of national collapse.

Racism in Europe, from our perspective, is a far more complicated issue than merely the ability of Turks to live in German cities or French girls of North African origin to wear their head scarves in school. Racism against individuals is merely the tip of an iceberg that reaches deep into history, and far across to other continents and cultures today.

The most impressive aspects of this racism and anti-semitism issue in Europe, I would suggest, is the passionate manner in which the vast majority of Europeans are mobilising to fight it, and to rid themselves of this lingering scar. It would be worthwhile, for Arab and Islamic governments and civic organisations to use this moment — especially this week of the Council of Europe's anti-racism action in Europe — to grasp the full political dimensions of the anti-racism struggle in Europe, and, more importantly, to identify opportunities for the Arab-Islamic people to engage in this struggle in our true persona — as one of the world's most ancient protagonists for valor and human decency, rather than only as the recurring and hapless historical victims.



### Turkey in the hawk's shadow

By Jonathan Regman

IT WAS in the Kurdish town of Cizre, an ugly concrete warren of shops and houses near Turkey's border with Iraq, that I watched the local population usher in the traditional Kurdish new year earlier this week.

A crowd of several hundred walked in spring sunshine down Cizre's big street, awkwardly waving Turkish flags in front of police marksmen. A plainclothes policeman filmed the scene from the gun turret of a bulletproof Land Rover. Whenever the camera was turned on, the Kurds responded by bursting into polite rounds of applause. This Kurdish new year was largely peaceful; very different from three years ago, when I saw a similar demonstration. Then there were shootings and deaths. Kurds shouted "Kurdistan" and furiously waved the red and yellow flags of the outlawed Kurdistan Labour Party (PKK).

Now you must look amongst the 600,000 Kurds of Europe for such violent outbursts of Kurdish nationalism. In the ancient Kurdish homeland, Turkish state forces appear to have regained control of most militant separatist strongholds, turning the area into what often feels like a vast prison camp.

The Turks have done it not by winning over Kurdish hearts and minds but by pouring in arms, men and informers; by killing, arresting or imprisoning tens of thousands of PKK members and supporters.

The PKK's rural power-base is vanishing. A Turkish Interior Ministry source has been quoted as saying two million civilians had been driven out of the conflict zone in the last decade, the majority in the last four years. Although it denies

operating a scorched earth policy against PKK terror, the Turkish army was reported to have burned down another group of rural Kurdish hamlets last week.

The last four years have seen hundreds of mysterious deaths and disappearances and of cases of torture in police custody. It now appears that the state has established an atmosphere of such secrecy and fear in Kurdish areas of Turkey that human rights abuses — intended to eliminate the PKK threat — can be committed with almost complete impunity. Now that radical Kurdish MPs have been locked up, now that the Kurdish-born Yashar Kemal, Turkey's most famous novelist, is facing trial in Istanbul for crimes of thought, what more can the country do to silence its internal critics?

The stakes for Turkey are high. Unless Turkey's record improves during the next six months, the European Parliament says it will try to block a customs union between the European Union (EU) and Ankara, a deal of mutual benefit.

Through customs union, Europe stands to gain a strong commercial foothold in an eastern Mediterranean market of 60 million through closer EU ties. Turkey, besieged by rampant inflation among other problems, would be strengthened in its commitment to becoming a Western style democracy.

But the corner the Turks are being asked to turn is perhaps the most difficult in their country's short history. Ever since Mustafa Kemal Ataturk ("father of the Turks") founded the modern republic in the 1920s, Turks have been nurtured on an educational diet of virulent, uncompromising and decidedly racist nationalism.

If human rights are to improve and Turkey is to move towards further democracy the country will have to unlearn many of the worst excesses of the revered Ataturk period. The idea of social consensus in Turkey is a myth; the country is a cauldron of increasingly distinct secular, religious and ethnic interest groups, and the idea that there is unity in diversity still hasn't taken grip.

The late president, Turgut Ozal, realised that Ataturk's rigid nationalist legacy had to be changed if social chaos was to be prevented. Mr. Ozal made a start, lifting the ban on the Kurdish language, even claiming in public that his grandmother was of Kurdish origin.

But since his death in 1993, Turkey has responded to the growing PKK conflict — a cancer — admittedly caused in part by the former president's relative liberalism — by clamping down on all forms of dissent.

The Prime Minister, Tansu Ciller, makes frequent reassurances to Western leaders that change is coming but, even if she is serious, conservative hawks in her own party are set to oppose democratic reform.

The fear in parliament and indeed amongst the general public is understandable; straddling the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Middle East, Turkey lives in a dangerous neighbourhood, riven by ethnic, religious and nationalist conflicts. If Turkey were to unban "separatist" thought crimes, if it were to allow Kurdish language broadcasting and education, many Turks fear the separatist PKK would be victorious — that Ataturk's sacred borders would begin to crack.

The sad fact is that even if the strict constitution

drawn up after the 1980 military coup were to be changed, Ankara would find it difficult to change the lifelong mentality to Turkish soldiers and police. As the Turkish army marched across the mountains into northern Iraq last week, it was embarking on what is for many Turks a holy grail — the defence of Ataturk's unitary state.

The Turkish army colonel briefing journalists began a fit of barking apology when I asked him to explain what was happening across the border: the Turks are members of NATO, but they can also be surely isolationists, believing they are answerable to nobody but themselves. That conviction gives soldiers and police carte blanche to treat Kurds any way they like.

None of this should detract from Europe's support for Turkey's war against the Marxist-Leninist PKK, which is fast emerging as the most violent guerrilla movement in both Europe and the Middle East. But just as Turkish security forces often blur the distinction between Kurdish rebels and civilians, so Ankara tends to mistake the difference between enemies and true friends.

Turkey's NATO allies need to be both critical and understanding, with human rights playing a major part in foreign policy. Not because we ought to care, but because if Turkey does not change its spots and embrace reform, it will slide ever further backwards into instability.

Last week's much trumpeted military operation in Iraq seems a sad diversion from the truth: that Turkey's Kurdish embroglio is primarily an internal problem, and one that must be urgently solved.

The Guardian

### Foreign policy: American leaders misread the public

By William Pfaff

PARIS — Every four years since 1974 the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations has taken a reading on what Americans believe about where their country stands in the world and where it should go in its foreign relations.

The latest survey was conducted late last year, and the results have just been published. They contradict the widely held assumption that Americans today have become isolationists, but contribute to the evidence that Americans are becoming increasingly isolated, out of touch with the world beyond. That is a matter for which the press bears a responsibility (and television a particularly heavy one).

Interest in news about local affairs has gone up by 10 per cent in the last four years, while interest in other countries and in U.S. relations with those countries has fallen. The percentage of local news interest is the highest in the history of the survey, at 65 per cent, a reflection of the concern with domestic problems that helped elect Bill Clinton. The public says in this survey that the first three of the nation's top 10 problems are crime, unemployment and health care/health insurance.

Foreign relations do not appear on that list, although foreign policy does appear as No. 10 on a separate list of what the country's leadership worries about. (The leadership figures come from a separate polling sample of congressmen and senators, Clinton administration officials, journalists, academics, and members of labour, church and interest groups).

Still, Americans want the United States to play a leading world role. Asked if the country should "take an active part in world affairs" or "stay out," the response is overwhelmingly for engagement — 65 per cent versus 29 per cent among the public, and 98 per cent versus 1 per cent among leaders.

Moreover, 73 per cent of the public and 43 per cent of the leaders think the United States will play an even greater role in the decade to come. "Declinism" obviously has not carried the day.

Nor is there a marked reluctance to use force. Ninety-one per cent of the

leaders and 54 per cent of the public would support the use of American troops against a Russian invasion of Western Europe, and almost as many (in both categories) would favour fighting to protect Saudi Arabia from Iraq. Sixty per cent of the leadership and 32 per cent of the public would be in favour of fighting if Russia invaded Poland.

These, of course, are snap reactions to telephone questions. A considered judgement might be different. The answers do not necessarily reflect a real grasp of the subjects at hand. A notorious case of this concerns foreign aid, which only 45 per cent of the general public favours (as against 86 per cent of the leaders). A minuscule publicised survey in January, made by two independent policy groups, together with an earlier Harris poll, found that Americans want aid expenditure to go down, but they also believe that 15 per cent to 20 per cent of the U.S. government's current spending goes to foreign aid. The actual aid figure, of course, is less than 1 per cent — military and nonmilitary aid combined.

The most striking result of the Chicago survey is what it reveals about the differences between leaders and public. Leaders are much more strongly in favour of troop use to defend American allies but also are lower in their support for NATO. Public support for the alliance is not far off where it was in 1974.

On the other hand, the leaders — 20 years ago strong, positive supporters of NATO — were by 1990 strongly negative in their attitude. Leaders are much more convinced that China will play a great world role in the future than is the general public. The public is much more of the opinion that Japan will have that role. Leaders strongly favour aid to Eastern Europe, Russia and Africa; the public attitude is negative about all three. Among leaders and general public more are unfavourable to aid for Israel. Leaders favour aid to the Palestinians on the West Bank and in Gaza. The public is unfavourable. Nearly half the leaders (47 per cent) are for U.S. arms sales abroad. Only 16 per cent of the public approves.

Las Angeles Times



# The two faces of terror

WHEN FOUAD and his police colleagues went on night assignments in Algiers, they wore hoods and leotards, carried kalashnikovs and popped pills to stay awake all night. They were nicknamed "Ninjas".

On one occasion, they turned up at the door of someone's flat. Fouad, as always, contrived to stay well in the background. His colleagues banged on the door. A sleepy-looking man opened it. "You are Mourad, aren't you?" they asked. "Yes, my name is Mourad." A shot rang out and the man crumpled to the floor. His children ran out as the police made off. It was a scene that Fouad experienced many times.

The members of the police squad got on well with each other, which was only normal, says Fouad, "when you have all managed to survive with bullets whistling past you." He occasionally complained about their methods, about the way they were willing, on the strength of a mere denunciation, telephone call or anonymous letter, to go and arrest, and sometimes execute, a man "without finding out if he was armed, if he was guilty..."

Once, a planned police assault on the second floor of a block of flats ended in carnage. Fouad's colleagues started shooting indiscriminately the moment they entered the building. Fouad said: "Wait, we must evacuate the building instead of killing anyone who happens to be around." His colleagues replied: "Are you on your side now?"

No doubt they said that in a moment of anger, for they knew that Fouad had once saved their lives in one of Algiers' main squares. That day, their squad had laid a trap for a "terrorist" belonging to the fundamentalist Armed Islamic Group (GIA). When he turned up for what he thought was an appointment, he smelt a rat. He was a kid of about 19 and, like many of the new Islamist hitmen, looked deliberately hip: jeans, leather jacket, earring, and a bum-bag round his waist, concealing a revolver.

The "terrorist" was about to draw his gun, but Fouad, who as usual had kept in the background, managed to shoot first. He hit him in the heart and felt no remorse. "I knew what his record was, and in cases like that I kill. I kill knowing I have proof. God knows that. There won't be any problems with God."

Whenever news came in that a policeman had been killed, his superior officers

only response were: "Did they take his gun?" or "Did they take his identity card?" He remembered how a colleague who had been seriously wounded asked about the possibility of compensation. He got a dusty answer from his superior officer: "Here you're paid to die!"

One day, at the police station, Fouad suddenly realised he was weeping. A memo had just come in from the headquarters of the Algiers police: any policeman living in an "exposed" area of town was strictly forbidden take his gun home. In other words, the idea was to prevent the guns of murdered policemen being recovered by the enemy.

"We were no better than shit," says Fouad. "And they wanted to turn us into madmen, into blood-thirsty beasts." He lived in the Cité des Eucalyptus, one of the poorest housing estates in Algiers, and an Islamist stronghold. He slept in the kitchen. "There were 14 of us crammed into a two-room flat."

One day a strange rumour started up which turned out to be true. The members of a family who were hounding their son, a murdered policeman, refused to allow his colleagues to touch the coffin and screamed: "It wasn't the Islamists who killed him, it was you lot." The policemen did not immediately understand the implications of their accusation.

What happened was that "the fairest and most liked" policeman in each district would be rubbed out by the authorities with the specific purpose of "shocking and outraging people." An officer who had allegedly been the target of an attack in which several of his men were killed was caught in the act of writing threatening letters to himself so as to dispel any suspicions: he had mounted the whole operation himself.

A group of "Ninjas" once got shot in the back by a military patrol that was following them. One police inspector, who was universally known to have had a criminal career before joining the force, confessed to murdering 14 of his colleagues.

Fouad remembers how he once chased a car whose occupants had just carried out an attack. "We managed to stick with it, and we were pretty pleased with ourselves. Then suddenly we saw it drive into the security forces barracks. I notified headquarters by radio and was told: 'Mission accomplished, return to the police station.'"

On another occasion, a car full of Islamist commandos executed a policeman in the street. "We got its registration number in order to identify the car. The walkie-talkie went completely dead. In the end we were asked to halt our investigations."

Samir, Ahmad and Kamel are Algerian policemen who, like their friend Fouad, fled to Paris six months ago. They report similar experiences: "As the years went by, everything got completely mixed up. We were convinced that members of the regime were killing each other, that there was a second form of terrorism — a legal terrorism — which was trying to raise the temperature. One couldn't trust anybody. We were supposed to be fighting the GIA, but we realised that spectacular attacks were being rigged by government services."

"It is difficult to see how the assassination of President Boudiaf by a lone gunman or the attack on the French consulate, a building surrounded by military barracks, could have been possible without complicity or manipulation. There are people at the head of the state who have an interest in keeping the war on the boil and postponing the moment of reckoning — which would reveal how they had misappropriated funds, for example."

Fouad, Samir, Ahmad and Kamel realised that it was their destiny to kill

without knowing what for, and to get killed without knowing by whom.

Sometimes, on their night patrols, they would enter into a strange dialogue with Islamist commandos using police radios they had seized in the course of their operations. Fouad heard things like: "Paradise is the fate of our dead; hell is reserved for yours." He shouted back: "You're up in the mountains, and meanwhile we're screwing your sister."

The Islamists, recited verses from the Koran in a gentle voice and said calmly: "In any case, we are going to kill you one by one." That angered Fouad: "If you really are a man, lay down your weapons, and we'll make an appointment and fight with our bare hands."

Once, at four o'clock in the morning, the patrol car he was in zigzagged to a halt at a corner. "I heard gunfire from all sides, I felt a bullet go through my leg. The policeman who was driving was dead, and I flopped over him and shut my eyes. When the shooting was over, I could sense someone's face staring at me. Then they went away."

When he went to hospital for treatment, he brought his own drugs and dressings, and stayed there for as short a time as possible. "It's probably one of the places where a policeman can most easily get bumped off," he said.

As the summer of 1994 was drawing to a close,

Fouad could see no way of extracting himself from his predicament. He had not been home for more than a year and was sleeping in an office at the police station.

A friend had been incensed enough to talk in the corridor about "government provocation and manipulation," and immediately members of military security set up a watch on his home. Policemen who resigned from the force were assassinated. Fouad swore that he would keep his last bullet for himself, so he would not have to suffer having his throat cut.

Ramadan had been an ordeal in 1994. There was no let-up in the wave of attacks. "One ended up forgetting about those who had been killed the previous day," Fouad was convinced the "terrorists" were planning an operation at sunset — at the very moment when, after a day of fasting you can think of nothing but the first second of darkness that means you can eat. "I ate my supper on the terrace of the police station with my kalashnikov on my knees."

Some policemen suspected of being double agents were tortured by their colleagues. They were given electric shocks, or were tied to a ladder and allowed to fall. "They talked. One of them went mad: He was prepared to confess to the assassination of Boudiaf."

The father of Fouad's fiancée cancelled their mar-

riage plans. "If I'd been a beggar, a street sweeper, anything but a policeman, he'd have accepted me." Ordinary people had long stopped talking to policemen.

Fouad, who grew up on a housing estate, had gone into the force because he liked the idea of directing traffic. He remembers the first months of his job in 1989, when he kept his uniform nicely ironed, worked afterwards at a major crossroads in Algiers and "smiled at the girls in the sun."

Ahmad remembers: "When we joined the police, we were the 'new Algerians.' They were beginning to appoint inspectors who were too young to have fought in the war of independence. We believed in elections, and in ending violence and corruption in the force. We had had legal training. We were posted to the districts we lived in, and for the people on the housing estates it made an extraordinary change."

As for Fouad, he just says: "Our credo as policemen was a bit like, 'The king is dead, long live the king!' We were prepared to go along with any government."

He had noticed at the beginning of the civil war that youngsters on his estate "who had done nothing" were being arrested and deported to camps in the desert. He knew that the police would keep on arresting, torturing and releasing people "until they

could take no more and joined the maquis."

Fouad learnt not to react when he went to the funerals of 19-year-old colleagues who had been beheaded. He said nothing when he was told by his superiors that from now on he would have to fire without warning at anyone he saw moving about the streets at night. "Yet I knew that on the estates young people often took it in turns to sleep in their beds for three hours. They would stand at the bottom of staircases having a smoke."

He did not protest when, after a patrol was over, he was told to go back on the job: "You can't just come back like that, your colleagues are in trouble, go and help them." Whenever he was able to, Fouad disobeyed orders. He might, for example, only pretend to go to a place where an attack had taken place.

He had no hope of finding a flat because his superiors had themselves grabbed the new flats that were supposed to go to policemen like him living in GIA strongholds.

His friend Ahmad had managed to slip out of Algiers during the holidays and take refuge in Paris.

From there he wrote Fouad a deliberately provocative letter. "Stay in your shirt since that's what you wanted," Fouad replied: "Here it's pure brainwashing. We're turning into vampires because we live so much at night. And

we have orders to fire at anything that moves." Often Fouad would go down to the beach at night just to scream at the waves.

When Fouad too managed to obtain permission to leave the country for a holiday, he handed in his police identity card just before getting on the plane, but without having time to notify his mother. He joined Ahmad and the other refugee policemen in Paris. Some of them have found accommodation in suburban garages, others are living with relatives.

They have applied for political asylum, but have no illusions about their chances. And while they wait for their visas to be renewed — which is also unlikely — they try to survive as best they can, selling handbags in the corridors of the Paris Métro or distributing leaflets in the street.

One day Fouad bumped into a childhood friend in Barbès, a Paris district with a high concentration of Arabs. "He belonged to the Islamic Salvation Front and I was a policeman, but we didn't care." The two men embraced each other several times and asked about their respective careers. Fouad says: "We got on well together."

He feels less of a policeman now. "Our bosses exploited us too much, they let us down too many times," he says. But he would dearly like them to get "their just deserts."

Le Monde

Fouad was so sickened by his experiences as a member of the 'Ninjas', part of the Algiers police force, that he fled to Paris. Dominique Le Guilledoux reports



## Separation

(Continued from page 1)

4,000 settlers in the Gush Katif area" close to the Egyptian border.

Mr. Ramon is a former minister and one of the rising stars of Mr. Rabin's Labour Party.

Some 5,000 settlers are still in the Gaza Strip where Palestinian self-rule was launched in May. Israeli soldiers continue to be deployed around the settlements to protect them.

Israel should "concentrate on solving the problem of unemployment which has reached 30 to 40 per cent of Palestinian workforce in the Gaza Strip, because it threatens the head of the autonomous authority, Yasser Arafat," Mr. Ramon said.

He also warned that until the delayed Palestinian elections took place, "the peace process remains reversible."

A senior official of the Labour Party met Monday with Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader, Yasser Arafat and said he was sure the two sides could reach a compromise on the next phase of Palestinian self-rule.

Nissim Zivli told reporters: "I am certain that we will reach a compromise which will allow the two parties to live in peace and security."

"Arafat understands Israel's security needs and we

understand we have to respect the political rights of the Palestinians," Mr. Zivli added after two hours of talks with the Palestinian leader in Jericho.

"The Labour Party's message is clear. We are committed to the peace process and we will do our best to see it succeed."

Mr. Arafat for his part said the meeting would help to "push forward the peace process while taking into account Israel's security needs."

The two sides have set a July 1 target date to reach an agreement on elections.

Mr. Arafat later left Jericho by helicopter after a four-day visit to return to his headquarters in the Gaza Strip.

He arrived in Jericho on Friday to meet U.S. Vice President Al Gore and held a Palestinian National Authority (PNA) cabinet meeting in the oasis town on Saturday.

## Algeria

(Continued from page 1)

Ruisseau suburb of the city, the statement said. The killers escaped in a vehicle that was waiting for them.

Abdul Rahmani was the 30th journalist to be murdered since May 1993 in attacks blamed on Muslim fundamentalists who have been at war with the secular, army-based government for the past three years.

The daily Liberte reported Monday that Islamic extrem-

ist gunmen killed 17 civilians and wounded three others in the Chief region of Algeria, 200 kilometres west of the capital.

The 20 people were travelling to market in Zebouda in two vans from the hamlet of Laghouat Lahdjar when they were stopped at a roadblock set up by the armed gang.

Radical groups in Algeria launched their campaign to topple the government after the military-backed government in January 1992 cancelled elections that a fundamentalist party was poised to win.

## Kabul

(Continued from page 12)

Gen. Qanooni said the role of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) — Pakistan's secret service which channelled weapons to Afghan groups during their 10-year war against the Soviet Union — could also "not be ruled out."

Defence ministry officers asserted that historically, Pakistan had always been a regional rival to Afghanistan, a neighbour "they feared and plotted" against to keep weak.

"Pakistan wants to keep us divided, fighting amongst ourselves, so that we'll never be a threat to them," one senior officer said.

Although the Afghan government did not recognise the Taliban as a legitimate

Afghan force, it would be prepared to negotiate with them, Gen. Qanooni said.

"We have no preconditions for negotiations with the Taliban, only that they should not resort to fighting against us," Gen. Qanooni said.

The Defence Ministry would accept provincial delegates from Taliban-controlled provinces as part of a United Nations-sponsored peace plan.

He stressed that Rabbani, whose two-year official term as president expired last December, was still willing to transfer power under an international peace plan provided the United Nations came up with a "practical mechanism" for this process.

Gen. Qanooni would not comment on whether ex-communist General Abdul Rashid Dostum, who launched an unsuccessful coup to topple Mr. Rabbani in January 1994, would be accepted by the president as a future ally.

On the question of Hezb-e-Islami leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, whose forces were defeated around Kabul in mid-February, Gen. Qanooni was much more conciliatory.

"We cannot deny the political role of Hezb or its leader in the future," Gen. Qanooni said.

In Islamabad, Pakistan, the United Nations on Monday made an emergency appeal for \$2 million in aid for Afghanistan, mostly for food and other urgently

needed supplies.

Millions of Afghans have been driven from their homes during the 16 years of fighting in the country. Food is available in Kabul, the scene of the heaviest recent battles, but is too expensive for many in a country that has no formal economy.

The \$2 million would go for food, transportation, and other humanitarian needs. Martin Barber, head of the U.N. aid programme to Afghanistan, told a news conference in Islamabad.

The world body requested \$106 million in humanitarian aid for Afghanistan this year, but has received pledges and contributions of less than \$30 million so far.

Many potential donor countries are reluctant to give when the country is still enmeshed in civil war.

## Syria

(Continued from page 1)

He added that Palestinian leaders "have not mentioned anything like this. On the contrary they have underlined Syria's respect of the right of Palestinians to voice their opinions."

Ten Palestinian groups opposed to the Israeli-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) autonomy accords are based in Damascus. Besides the DFLP and PFLP, they also include the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, and Islamic Jihad.

Israel's Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin would not directly confirm the report but said it was one of the Jewish state's conditions in its peace talks with Syria in Washington.

Israel and Syria resumed direct talks at ambassadorial level in Washington last week after a three-month suspension as a result of a Mideast peace mission by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

Their ambassadors to the United States, Itamar Rabinovich of Israel and Syria's Walid Mualllem, are focusing on security arrangements to follow an Israeli withdrawal on the Golan Heights.

## Iraq

(Continued from page 1)

But Saadi Medhi Saleh, who has chaired the legislature since 1989, suggested there was still room for leniency in handling their case.

Mr. Saleh spoke to the Associated Press two days after the men were tried in an Iraqi court.

Conviction of sabotage or espionage could have resulted in the death sentence or prison terms for life.

On Sunday, Ryszard Krynski, a Polish diplomat who heads the U.S. interest section in Baghdad, urged Iraq to free the two Americans, saying they are "absolutely innocent."

He also said he would insist

that his office be given the right to visit the men in prison.

In the first comment from an Iraqi official since the conviction, Mr. Saleh said: "We have already (tried) these two infiltrators according to Iraqi law, which prohibits the entering of the borders according to illegal ways."

He added: "Those two detainees were entering our border secretly and by illegal manner, maybe for political or technical reasons. And we have detained them to know these reasons."

He implied that the Americans' motivation may have been sabotage, saying: "We have no aggressive intentions towards those two Americans. But we have just applied Iraqi law according to the manner we do to all the foreigners who are coming for sabotage or other political reasons."

Asked if there was room for leniency, given the men's claim that the crossing was accidental, Mr. Saleh said: "The humanitarian doors are not shut to them yet."

## Turkey

(Continued from page 1)

hardware to Turkey, has expressed concern at Ankara's military campaign in Iraq.

German rights groups and military experts say Turkey is breaking its promise to Bonn and using German weaponry in its campaign.

Ankara has denied the charge, which has been raised frequently in the past, and Mr. Kinkel has said he sees no reason to doubt the word of his Turkish colleagues.

Six Germans arrested in southeastern Turkey as suspected collaborators with the PKK on Saturday were released on Monday, the German foreign ministry said.

A ministry spokesman could not give any information about a Belgian photographer and a Briton also reportedly detained in Cilve, south of Diyarbakir, the same day.

The Germans were released from house arrest in a hotel at around midday and were on their way to Ankara, a receptionist at the hotel said. The foreign ministry spokesman said they would make their way back to Germany.

The Belgian photographer, Koen Obgenhaffen, told Belgian VTM television on Sunday he and the Germans were detained when they refused to hand over their photo equipment.

## France

(Continued from page 12)

and hundreds of millions on Russian and Chinese arms.

The emirate has budgeted \$12 billion over the next decade to re-equip its armed forces.

The boats' weapons have yet to be subcontracted. The boats are due to be delivered over the next four years.



## Egyptian president opens meeting on African economy

CAIRO (R) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak Monday opened an African foreign ministers meeting on the economy of the world's poorest continent with a call for solving its growing debts problem.

"Debts have reached a level beyond that of the African countries' ability, especially at a time when they are subject to pressure after the implementation of structural reform programmes and liberalising trade," President Mubarak told more than 30 African ministers taking part in the two-day meeting.

He added that "\$300 billion of African debts is a terrifying number, putting in consideration all the deteriorating economic conditions among the continent's countries."

President Mubarak warned that economic and social development cannot be achieved without putting an end first to several armed conflicts in the continent, including civil wars.

"We will not be able to

face our challenges as long as destructive conflicts continue to exist between some of our countries, or even among people of the same country," he said.

He called for the activation of the so-called African conflict-resolution mechanism which African leaders approved in an earlier summit.

In his speech, President Mubarak emphasised the importance of enhancing inter-African trade which now stands at five per cent of the continent's total trade. He called for measures to confront the negative short and medium term effects of the GATT agreement on African countries.

The ministers, whose countries are members of the Organisation of African Unity, will seek to approve a "Cairo declaration" on economic and social development in Africa.

A draft released ahead of the two-day meeting, entitled "Relaunching Africa's Economic and Social Development," said the ministers would try to minimise threats

to Africa's precious commodity exports from implementation of the Uruguay Round GATT agreements.

The draft says governments should set up business guidelines to promote foreign investment in Africa — currently just two per cent of direct foreign investment in the developing world.

The declaration also says African states, highly dependent on cash from their commodity exports, should respond to the erosion of international trade preferences caused by the GATT agreement by boosting intra-African commerce.

It says member states, while aiming to promote their cash crops for exports, cannot afford to ignore the pressing needs of their own hungry populations.

The text urges African countries to set aside at least one per cent of GDP to develop science and technology. It urges them to modernise their rudimentary industrial base and redouble efforts to explore and develop energy resources.

## Dollar breathes easy as sellers fade

LONDON (R) — The dollar clambered to firmer ground Monday as sellers shied away, wary that authorities could swing into action to ward off attacks in a week when Germany and the United States will ponder interest rates.

"If there is going to be coordinated action to help the dollar this is the week to do it," said David Coleman, treasury adviser at investment bank CIBC Wood Gundy.

Elsewhere, Wall Street's record high close on Friday kick-started European stock markets as German and French shares surged more than one per cent in early trading.

The dollar held comfortably above 1.41 marks and 89 yen in morning European trading, after the Bank of Japan supported it aggressively overnight, dealers said.

Talk that Japan may ease its official interest rate to limit the soaring yen also allowed the dollar to catch its breath. "While that speculation remains, dollar/yen is going to remain well underpinned," said Adam Chester, bond strategist at Yamaichi International in London.

The U.S. and German central banks will meet to consider monetary policy on Tuesday and Thursday respectively. Analysts do not expect them to alter interest rates — a factor which could knock the dollar off its ledge later in the week.

Germany, torn between pressure to ease credit and quell a punishingly high mark and a need to subdue inflationary fears, may how to price pressures and keep the cost of credit unchanged, analysts say.

Towards the end of the week we may see some setback in the dollar on the mark if the FOMC (Federal Open Market Committee) don't do anything and hubbale rates unchanged," Mr. Chester said.

Last week Bundesbank President Hans Tietmeyer appeared to rule out a cut in rates as a response to imbalances in the foreign exchange market which have seen European currencies and the dollar strike record lows against the mark this month.

The German unit was slightly firmer in early trading on Monday.

On the stock exchanges, German and French shares retreated from early highs but still clung to double-digit gains.

London's market — Europe's largest — climbed a

few points but was off the day's best, although technically strong due to a shortage of stock. The FTSE 100 index breached the 3,150 barrier on Friday and made an unsuccessful attempt at a fresh hurdle some 20 points higher.

Dealers said the market was nervy in the wake of Wall Street's 50.8 point climb on Friday — its seventh new closing high in 11 sessions.

The U.S. market is storming ahead on hopes the Federal Reserve had managed to engineer a "soft landing" for the booming economy.

Tokyo's nikkei-225 index ended a sharp 2.20 per cent up at 16,096.25. Brokers said the rise was a mere correction after six days of falls, and that sentiment had not improved much from last week.

## Oman outlines major gas liquefaction project

DOHA (AFP) — The Gulf state of Oman has released details of its first gas liquefaction project, which it said would cost around \$8 billion and produce over six million tonnes per year.

The project will target the Far East and other countries and the Omani government has been involved in negotiations with potential buyers to get one of the biggest gas projects in the region off the ground.

"The final investment decision is scheduled for mid-1996, with the plant ready for start-up at the end of 1999 and first cargo in early 2000," said Khalifa bin Mubarak Al Hinai, director general of the gas and petroleum industries department at the Omani oil ministry.

Mr. Hinai, speaking at a key gas conference in the Gulf state of Qatar, said the project had two main phases — upstream and downstream.

The upstream phase involves the appraisal of the gas, its subsequent development and production and its transport by pipeline to the liquefaction plant, he said, adding this part would be fully owned by the Omani government.

The downstream project comprises gas liquefaction, shipping and marketing. It is being undertaken by the government as a 51 per cent owner. The other shareholders include Shell Overseas Trading Ltd, Total, Parlex (Oman) Corporation, Mitsubishi, Mitsui and Itochu.

## Israeli cabinet approves tax cut

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's cabinet has approved a tax cut that would save middle income Israelis the equivalent of \$400 million.

The tax cut, which is to go into effect in September, was passed by a vote of 10-7. It will reduce income tax for Israelis earning more than 1,500 shekels (\$200) a month on average by about a tenth.

Cabinet ministers who opposed the plan charged it would increase the gap between rich and poor, and opposition leaders maintained it was aimed at bolstering Mr. Rabin's sagging popularity ahead of elections scheduled for 1996.

Finance Minister Avraham Shohat said the intention was to ease the burden on the 600,000 Israelis — about a quarter of wage earners — who together pay 80 per cent of all income tax.

"The people who pay more have to be rewarded," Economics Minister Shimon Peres told reporters.

But Labour Minister Ora Namir said she preferred to see those reducing taxes on poorer Israelis.

The tax cut is part of a wider-ranging plan presented by Mr. Shohat last week that also included an interest rate cut by the central bank.

## Greece cut in two by tax rebels, transport chaos

ATHENS (R) — Greek farmers, in open revolt against a new Socialist tax law, vowed Monday to keep up a week-long blockade which has caused transport chaos by cutting the country's main north-south overland links.

Hundreds of tractors, many flying Greece's blue and white flag, are now blocking road and rail lines between Athens and the main northern port city of Salonika, effectively cutting the country in two.

Despite repeated pleas by the Socialist government to give up the protest, the farmers' resolve showed no sign of weakening Monday.

"We're not leaving. We'll stay here until Easter if our demands aren't met," one farmer told a television interviewer. Orthodox Easter is on April 23.

The revolt has caused traffic chaos, sent vegetable prices soaring, begun to choke off petrol supplies and is growing into a major showdown with the Socialist government.

State Railway Company (OSE) President George Petros said Monday he would sue those obstructing trains. He estimated the dispute was costing OSE more than 100 million drachmas (\$425,000) a day.

Shopkeepers and merchants have joined the tax

revolt as well, calling a nationwide strike on Wednesday. They have shut shops sporadically around Greece for two weeks and occupied government offices.

The main complaint against the law is a set of "assessment criteria" which determines the minimum tax that non-salaried workers must pay, regardless of their declared income.

The law, passed by parliament last year, aims to force the country's notorious legion of tax evaders to pay up. Economists estimate the black economy at some \$30 to \$45 billion a year.

The farmers' demands have grown to include a list of items including higher produce prices, lower fuel prices and Greece's withdrawal from various international farm accords.

"These mobilisations... are the final spasms of whole groups of people who want to retain their exemption from paying taxes," Finance Minister Alexandros Papadopoulos said.

National Economy Minister Yannis Papadopoulos told reporters after crisis talks with other senior ministers on Monday: "The mobilisations by a small number of farmers constitute a negative development. They harm society as a whole."

## Home sales in U.S. fall sharply

WASHINGTON (AFP) — News of a sharp drop in U.S. home sales in February added to signs that the economy is slowing Monday, a day before the Federal Reserve (Fed) meets to decide whether to raise interest rates further.

Sales of existing homes fell five per cent in February after a revised four per cent drop in January, surprising markets, which had been expecting a fall of less than one per cent.

The slowdown was seen as being largely due to higher mortgage rates, the result of moves by the Fed to raise interest rates seven times in the past 13 months to try to rein in sharp economic growth before it led to higher inflation.

The increases have taken the average interest rate on a 30-year home mortgage to 8.77 per cent, compared to 7.15 per cent in February last year — a difference in monthly payments of some \$140 on a loan of \$100,000.

The February home sales figures added to a growing list of economic indicators suggesting that the rate increases were having the desired effect, although some economic data are still surging ahead unabated.

Even before Monday's home sales figures, most analysts were expecting the Fed to adopt a wait and see attitude when its policy-making open markets committee meets Tuesday, and not move again on interest rates until the economic trend becomes clearer.

Economic figures for January and February have come in extremely mixed, and several Fed governors have expressed the opinion that the effects of the past year's rate hikes have not yet trickled through.

## Israel-EU trade talks at impasse, official says

TEL AVIV (R) — Negotiations between the European Union (EU) and Israel aimed at finalising a new economic accord reached an impasse at the weekend over agricultural issues, an Israeli agriculture ministry official said.

Tzvi Alon, the agriculture ministry's representative at the trade talks, said in a Sunday statement that the negotiations were held in "an atmosphere that was not good, without real intent to conclude (negotiations) successfully."

No immediate EU comment was available.

Mr. Alon said the EU had pressured Israel over the years to limit import duties on food products and proposed this be explicitly defined in the accord.

"This week, when Israel agreed to this in principle, it became apparent that the EU was not prepared to do the same at its end," Israel's agriculture ministry said in a statement.

Israel and the European Union have been negotiating this accord for months. Israel's foreign ministry has openly supported the accord despite strong objections from both the agriculture and industry and trade ministries.

The agriculture ministry is mainly concerned with Israeli exports of grapes, flowers, oranges and meat and has been seeking more favourable terms on shipments of these goods to the EU.

Israel this week agreed to

grant more favourable terms to EU exports but the EU refused in turn to exempt Israeli goods from "strict limitations," the statement said without elaborating.

The statement also charged that with regard to the participation of Finland, Sweden and Austria in the EU, the latest proposal for Israeli exports to these countries could lead to millions of dollars in losses for Israel.

"The Europeans have all the reasons to improve terms for our exports. They got a fair deal from us for their goods and if they do not reciprocate, a real crisis will erupt which, within a few months, will cause great damage to both sides," Mr. Alon warned.

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## Short of meat and milk, Cubans turn to soybeans

HAVANA (R) — Faced with severe shortages of beef and cow's milk, Cuba is stepping up production of protein-rich soy products such as soy yoghurt, soy ice-cream and soyburgers.

Food Industry Minister Alejandro Roca said plans are under way to boost soybean production to replace essential, customary foods.

Soybeans were never an important component of the Cuban diet. Most Cubans say they will eat products like soyburgers if there is nothing else, but will continue to dream about beef, pork, chicken and butterfat-rich ice-cream which are traditional Cuban soul foods.

Under Cuba's present rationing system, all children under seven years of age receive a quart (0.9 litres) of cow's milk a day but those in other age groups receive only a few cans of items like condensed milk a month.

Yoghurt, ice cream and cream cheese made from cow's milk were in abundant supply until a few years ago, but have seen a steep decline.

Limited food supplies are one symptom of economic troubles in Cuba, struggling both under a U.S. trade embargo and the loss of aid from its former ally, the Soviet Union.

Mr. Roca said the production of yoghurt made from soy milk will reach 40,000 tonnes this year compared to 11,000 last year, with a goal of 100,000 tonnes by 1996.

Since the mid-eighties, the ground (minced) meat received by Cuban families under the strict system of food rationing has contained a substantial portion of soy meal. The official meat ration in Havana is three-quarters of a pound (about one third of a kilo) every ten days.

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## HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR ASTROLOGY MARCH 28, 1995  
By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Come to a better meeting of the minds with associates and increase your productivity today. You can make a fine impression on them now by what you accomplish.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Be more cooperative with associates and establish more harmony today. Routine duties should be handled with precision for prosperity to occur.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Be quick in seizing a new opportunity to advance in your line of endeavour now handle business affairs wisely and be pleased to take on any situation occurs.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You are able to gain a cherished aim today. Be sure not to neglect important routines thereby you can think constructively.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Come to a greater accord with associates so that you can work more harmoniously with them. Make plans for the days ahead with any project.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Plan your activities early, since the planets are favourable this morning. You have excellent ideas that should be put into operation now to get the best results.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) This is the time to put a special talent you have to work to gain the recognition you deserve. Sidelstep one who is belligerent to you and inaccurate also.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You are now inspired and can find new activities through which to express yourself. Avoid a foe today who has a knack for showing up at the wrong time.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Have a serious talk with the one you love and patch up any differences you have before you go to bed this evening. Relax at home tonight for peace of mind.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You can reach a far better understanding with an associate now and get much more accomplished by going directly to the issues.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You can be gregarious now and gain excellent results. Your hunches are accurate today so use them to benefit you.

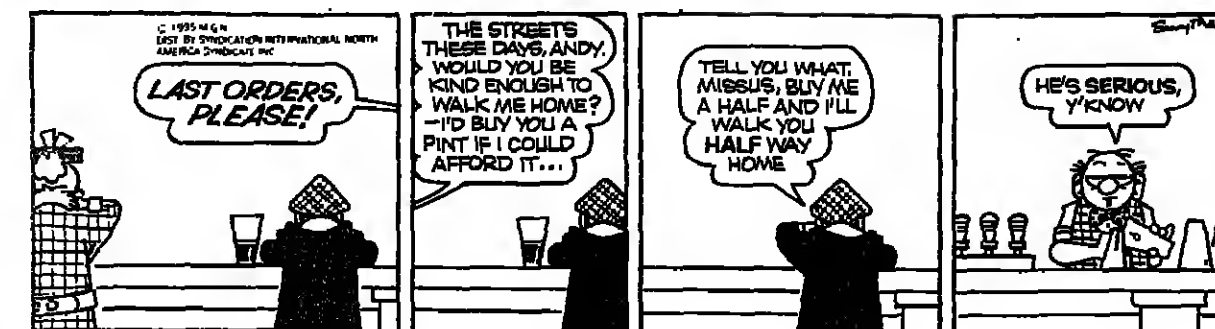
PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Try to entertain your associates now and come to a better understanding. Find a better way to gain the favour of a friend which will benefit you.

Birthstone of March: Aquamarine — Jasper

## Peanuts



## Andy Capp



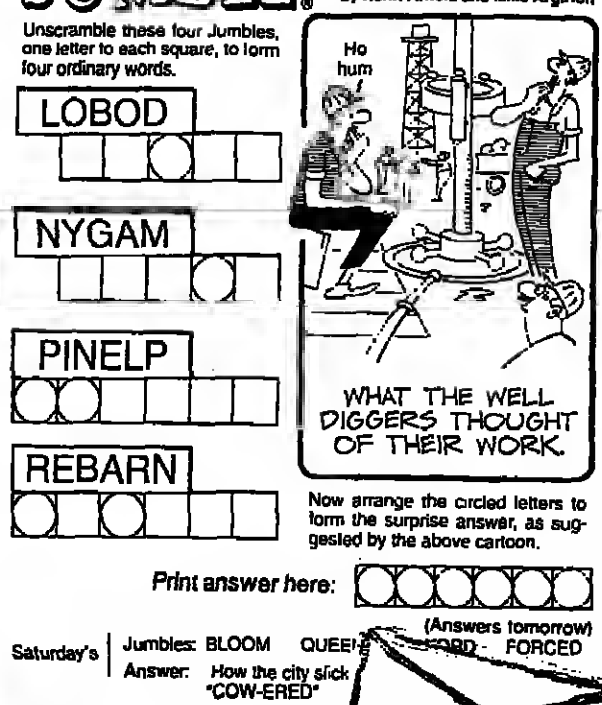
## Mutt'n'Jeff



## THE BETTER HALF



## JUMBLE



## THE Daily Crossword





# Economic slowdown hits Saudi bank profits

DUBAI (R) — An economic slowdown in Saudi Arabia and falls in world bond markets last year hit 1994 bank profits in the oil-rich kingdom, bankers said Monday.

They said prospects for the kingdom's banks in 1995 did not appear much brighter.

Although assets of 11 of the country's 12 banks that have announced their results so far grew in 1994, five saw profits decline between 7.6 per cent and 36.9 per cent. Profit growth of the other banks was generally slower than in previous years.

Riyadh Bank, the second largest in the kingdom, registered the 36.9 decline in profits, which the bank said was due to unfavourable conditions on world financial markets.

But all banks remain profitable and bankers said they are encouraged by the government's recent macroeconomic moves, which included slashing projected 1995 public spending, raising the price of public utilities and starting to repay billions of dollars in arrears owed to contractors.

National Commercial Bank did well and the Saudi American Bank notched profit growth of 7.2 per cent.

But the bankers said the public spending cuts and a growing private sector role in the economy are pressuring banks to lend money they do not have.

"We haven't got money to lend. It is as simple as that. The liquidity here has been dry for months now and it is highly unlikely that that situation is going to improve this year," one senior banker said.

Figures compiled by United Saudi Commercial Bank (USCB) showed the 11 banks lent 121 billion riyals (\$32 billion) in 1994, up 12.2 per cent from 107 billion (\$28 billion) in 1993.

But the economic slowdown has slowed customer deposits, which edged up by only 3.3 per cent to 225 billion riyals (\$59 billion) in 1994. This in turn has restricted the amount of money banks can lend on to business.

Saudi Arabia, like other Gulf Arab states, is suffering a slow-down because of falling world oil prices and huge

financial commitments and bankers said they were now receiving less government deposits and repatriated private funds.

"The 1994 results of banks were mixed largely due to different positioning in bond holdings," one banker said. "There is a lot of unrealised loss on bond positions and some interest rate losses as well as derivatives losses."

Saudi banks usually have significant exposure in world bond markets, which took a sharp downturn in 1994.

Bankers did not expect high growth this year.

"All budgeting for 1995 is with no growth in balance sheets, deposits or loans but reasonable increases in profits purely from the benefit of the rise of interest rates," one said.

But one encouraging sign for banks was government moves to repay part of its \$5 billion estimated debt to contractors.

The Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency (SAMA), the country's central bank, on March 15 issued special bonds to clear some of this. Bankers said it has also been making some cash payments.

The bonds, with maturities of up to two years, can be cashed at the banks, probably at a discount, or used as collateral for loans. Some of the debts have been overdue for years.

Some bankers believed this would inject liquidity into the market. But others remain sceptical and wanted to see how the new bonds were handled before judging their impact.

USCB figures showed banks' total assets rose 3.9 per cent to 327.6 billion riyals (\$87 billion) from 315.4 billion (\$84 billion) in 1993.

# Investments in Jebel Ali top \$3b

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Private investment in the Jebel Ali free zone, one of the premier free zones in the Middle East, topped \$3 billion at the end of last year, an official said Monday.

Sultan Bin Sulayem, director of the zone and the Dubai Ports Authority, said 735 companies were operating in the zone at the end of 1994.

Of these, 200 companies are in manufacturing, 181 in warehousing and distribution, 217 in trading and 137 in the services sector.

In terms of capital investment, manufacturing accounted for more than 83 per cent of the private investment, Mr. Sulayem said.

Apart from the Middle East, and especially the Gulf, Europe has emerged as a major investor in the zone.

The Middle East accounted for the largest number of companies with 282, including 229 from within the Gulf Cooperation Council countries — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the UAE. There are 176 European

firms from 23 countries and 48 from the subcontinent — 124 from India, 23 from Pakistan and one from Sri Lanka.

The Far East is represented by 27 companies from Japan and 14 from Hong Kong. There are also 33 U.S. companies, with seven from Canada and two from Bermuda.

There are 10 from sub-Saharan Africa, four from Central and South America and two from Australia.

Competition from other regional zones is growing as the neighbouring emirate of Abu Dhabi recently announced it will set up three industrial zones.

Iran, across the Gulf, has several free zones and other Gulf countries are said to be streamlining their zone operations to make them more attractive to international investors.

Mr. Sulayem said that the Dubai zone has achieved a balanced economic profile with a wide range of activities, from manufacturing through distribution to services.

# Ports Corporation plans better shipping role for Aqaba

★ THE PORTS Corporation has prepared a new regulation that includes new bases for owning and operating vessels in Aqaba. The new regulation, to be discussed later by the Council of Ministers, will remove all obstacles that have prevented people and companies from owning and registering vessels in Jordan. According to Dureid Mahasneh, director-general of the Ports Corporation, the new regulations will provide comprehensive tax exemptions and will encourage foreign companies to invest by owning and registering vessels in Jordan. He indicated that by having vessels registered in Jordan with Jordanian flag, the Kingdom will be able to save large amounts which, otherwise, would have been paid as freight fees.

Dr. Mahasneh pointed out that the new regulation would provide wide employment opportunities for many Jordanians specialised in marine services and that would greatly benefit the Treasury (AI Ra'i).

★ THE MUNICIPALITY of Greater Amman will begin reasphalting a number of main and secondary roads in Amman on April 1. Mayor Mamdouh Abadi said the municipality finished awarding the necessary tenders and gave instructions to contractors to start the work at the beginning of next month. A JD 3.5 million had been allocated for this month (AI Ra'i).

★ THE JORDAN Petroleum Refinery Company (JPRC) will be distributing unleaded petrol from Saturday. The unleaded petrol, which does not suit most cars in Jordan, will be selling for 350 fils a litre and will be available at the JPRC station in Jabal Amman and Al Burj station on the Seventh Circle. Special petrol costs 300 fils per litre while ordinary petrol sells at 220 fils a litre (AI Aswaq).

★ ACCORDING TO Wahj Hamdi, Egyptian ambassador in Jordan, Egypt is studying the possibility of supplying natural gas to Jordan. The ambassador said the subject was raised by Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Samih Darwazah during the meetings of the Higher Jordanian-Egyptian Joint Committee in Cairo two weeks ago (AI Dustour).

★ TOTAL ASSETS of the Central Bank surged by JD 39 million last month to reach JD 3,155.9 million at the end of February compared to JD 3,116.9 million at the end of January 1995 (AI Dustour).

★ THE NATIONAL Jordanian Aluminium Foils Company, a public shareholding company registered at the Ministry of Industry and Trade on Feb. 22, 1995 with an authorised JD 1.4 million capital, is floating JD 350,000 shares at JD 1 par value for public subscription. The company plans to spend JD 800,000 to buy land, build a plant and acquire equipment and vehicles. The remaining amount will be used as a working capital and reserves for emergency needs. Main founders of the company are: Ahmad Tewfik Abul Ronb (JD 70,000), the Premier Company for National Investments (JD 70,000), Fayed Sharaf Al Fayed (JD 70,000), Khaled Abdul Rahman Al Khatib, a Lebanese, (JD 30,000), Zuhair Mhyar (JD 30,000), Daoud Al Far (JD 30,000) and Basima Al Nabulsi (JD 30,000). Subscription, which starts April 1 and ends April 20, 1995, should be for a minimum 200 shares with only 25 per cent of the value to be paid. The remaining 75 per cent of the cost is to be paid over the next four years (AI Ra'i).

But all banks remain profitable and bankers said they are encouraged by the government's recent macroeconomic moves, which included slashing projected 1995 public spending, raising the price of public utilities and starting to repay billions of dollars in arrears owed to contractors.

**Financial Jordan Times**  
In co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close 24/3/95	Tokyo Close 27/3/95
Starling Pound	1.5940	1.5925
Deutsche Mark	1.4123	1.4152
Swiss Franc	1.1742	1.1675
French Franc	4.9885	4.9778
Japanese Yen	81.75	81.59
European Currency Unit	1.8207	1.8223

Source: Reuters

**Repatriation Investment Rates** Date: 27/3/1995

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.81	6.00	6.12	6.43
Starling Pound	6.06	6.15	6.75	7.31
Deutsche Mark	4.61	4.75	4.81	5.12
Swiss Franc	5.12	5.32	5.54	5.76
French Franc	7.58	7.58	7.25	7.06
Japanese Yen	2.06	1.82	1.82	1.82
European Currency Unit	6.61	6.68	6.87	6.93

Source: Reuters

**Previous Months** Date: 27/3/1995

Month	USD/JP	JP/USD	USD/DM	DM/USD
March	522.20	7.40	58.00	6.61

Source: Reuters

**Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin** Date: 27/3/1995

Currency	Old	New
U.S. Dollar	0.4980	0.4980
Starling Pound	0.8965	0.8965
Deutsche Mark	0.4661	0.4661
Swiss Franc	0.5692	0.5692
French Franc	0.1583	0.1583
Japanese Yen	0.7491	0.7491
Dutch Guilder	0.4342	0.4342
Swedish Krona	0.0000	0.0000
Italian Lira	0.0399	0.0399
Belgian Franc	0.0000	0.0000

Source: Reuters

**Other Currencies** Date: 27/3/1995

Currency	Old	New
Bahraini Dinar	1.8140	1.8220
Lebanese Lira	0.041675	0.041725
Saudi Riyal	0.1836	0.1846
Kuwaiti Dinar	0.3180	0.3200
Qatari Riyal	0.1185	0.1200
Egyptian Pound	0.1000	0.1000
Omani Riyal	1.7650	1.7950
UAE Dirham	0.1872	0.1882
Greek Drachma	0.2760	0.3350
Cypriot Pound	1.4425	1.5250

Source: Reuters

**LONDON EXCHANGE RATES**

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Monday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs	Canadian dollar
1.3990/00	0.7000/00
1.4136/46	0.6990/00
1.5850/60	0.6980/00
1.1692/02	0.6970/00
29.11/15	0.6960/00
4.9760/10	0.6950/00
1710.6/5.6	0.6940/00
89.49/59	0.6930/00
7.3025/25	0.6920/00
6.2880/30	0.6910/00
5.6165/15	0.6900/00
\$1.5932/42	0.6890/00
One sterling	0.6880/00
One ounce of gold	\$382.20/\$382.50

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**ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MARCH 27/03/1995**

COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES	TRADED	VALUE	PREV. CLOSING	CHG.
ARAB BANK PLC	1040	186310	187.500	190.000	-2.500
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	0600	42706	4.450	4.460	-0.010
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK / NEW	3850	10783	4.320	4.360	-0.040
BANK OF JORDAN	10264	34478	3.450	3.200	+0.250
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	4500	6330	1.350	1.420	-0.070
THE HOUSING BANK	0050	40535	6.050	6.100	-0.050
JORDAN KOWAT BANK	284	812	2.900	2.860	+0.040
JORDAN GULF BANK	6200	7014	1.100	1.130	-0.030
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	5020	19002	3.760	3.700	+0.060
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	3124	11403	3.650	3.050	+0.600
BEIT ALGAL SAVINGS INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	250	750	3.020	3.000	+0.020
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	10211	21282	1.110	1.100	+0.010
ARAB BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	1065	4207	4.000	4.000	0.000
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	1100	1506	1.220	1.220	0.000
<b>BANKS SECTOR</b>	<b>72367</b>	<b>403347</b>	<b>INDEX NUMBER: 150.43</b>	<b>CHANGE: +0.81</b>	
JORDAN FRENCH INSURANCE	35550	01471	2.520	2.500	+0.020
<b>INSURANCE SECTOR</b>	<b>35550</b>	<b>01471</b>	<b>INDEX NUMBER: 134.02</b>	<b>CHANGE: +0.10</b>	
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	41700	67583	1.550	1.630	-0.080
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER / NEW	170970	27078	1.500	1.550	-0.050
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS	7321	39185	5.250	5.210	+0.040
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS / NEW	23239	123208	5.050	5.300	-0.250
JORDAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINES	2150	6310	2.950	2.900	+0.050
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	500	930	1.880	1.860	+0.020
REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	1000	1132	1.150	1.120	+0.030
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTER	700	690	0.500	1.000	-0.500
MACHINERY EQUIP. REPAIRING & MAINTENANCE	5050	3399	0.660	0.680	-0.020
JORDAN PHARM FOUNDATION / ALBAI	300	3055	10.300	10.150	+0.150
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & COMMERCE HOTELS	1200	2978	2.350	2.310	+0.040
ARAB INVEST. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	1700	5568	3.280	3.280	0.000
<b>SERVICES SECTOR</b>	<b>273605</b>	<b>551941</b>	<b>INDEX NUMBER: 120.05</b>	<b>CHANGE: +0.55</b>	
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	13988	42076	3.000	3.000	0.000
THE ARAB POTASH/NEW	750	3336	4.420	4.420	0.000
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	5445	50590	9.200	9.200	0.000
THE JORDAN WOODSTOCK MILLS	2005	15217	7.350	7.370	-0.020
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	34232	136939	4.010	4.000	+0.010
JORDAN DAIRY INDUSTRY	200	444	2.220	2.220	0.000
THE JORDAN FIBRE MANUFACTURING	5650	15145	2.690	2.080	+0.610
RAPIA INDUSTRIES	7600	18972	2.500	2.460	+0.040
DAR AL DAMA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	5758	43071	7.480	7.400	+0.080
ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	800	860	0.600	0.600	0.000
ARAB ALUMINUM INDUSTRY	1550	0940	0.410	0.410	0.000
HYDROSTOCK & POLYMER	40500	26237	0.640	0.660	-0.020
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	27200	38785	1.400	1.340	+0.060
JORDAN STEEL INDUSTRY	1000	3460	3.400	3.440	-0.040
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	1050	2350	2.200	2.050	+0.150
JORDAN NOODLE INDUSTRIES	2250	2505	1.110	1.140	-0.030
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MATERIALS/INDCO	1250	938	0.750	0.750	0.000
NATIONAL CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING	850	3655	4.400	4.300	+0.100
JORDAN SILICO-CHEMICALS	4100	5796	1.460	1.410	+0.050
ARAB CEMENT FOR PAINTS & CHEMICALS	17500	3009	2.250	2.200	+0.050
JORDAN CEMENT FOR PAINTS & CHEMICALS	12000	3358	2.580	2.580	0.000
UNIVERSAL MODERN INDUSTRIES	7100	28027	3.950	3.900	+0.050
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.	3250	6338	1.900	1.790	+0.110
<b>INDUSTRIAL SECTOR</b>	<b>106902</b>	<b>455744</b>	<b>INDEX NUMBER: 118.13</b>	<b>CHANGE: -0.14</b>	
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>550424</b>	<b>1502802</b>	<b>INDEX NUMBER: 140.17</b>	<b>CHANGE: +0.54</b>	
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET	00758				
VALUE TRADED IN PARALLEL MARKET	75344				

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## Brazilian Grand Prix Berger named winner after disqualifications

SAO PAULO (AFP) — Ferrari's Gerhard Berger was awarded victory in the Brazilian Grand Prix Sunday after reigning World Champion Michael Schumacher and David Coulthard, who were first across the line, were disqualified for using illegal fuel.

Analysis of the fuel in Schumacher's Benetton Renault and Coulthard's Williams Renault "showed distinct differences" from the standard fuel samples submitted by the French Elf company before the season started, race stewards said.

The announcement was made some five-and-a-half hours after the end of the race — the opening round of the 1995 World Championship — and both Williams and Benetton gave notice of appeal, which must be confirmed within a week.

Disqualifying the two leaders moved Finn Mike Hakkinen in a McLaren Mercedes into second place while Berger's Ferrari teammate Jean Alesi of France took third spot.

Britain's Mark Blundell in the second McLaren was fourth. Blundell's fuel was also tested but found to conform to the standard sample, the FIA said.

Berger, who waited at the track for the result, said: "I'm happy. If the other cars didn't meet the rules, well that's too bad. That's why we have rules."

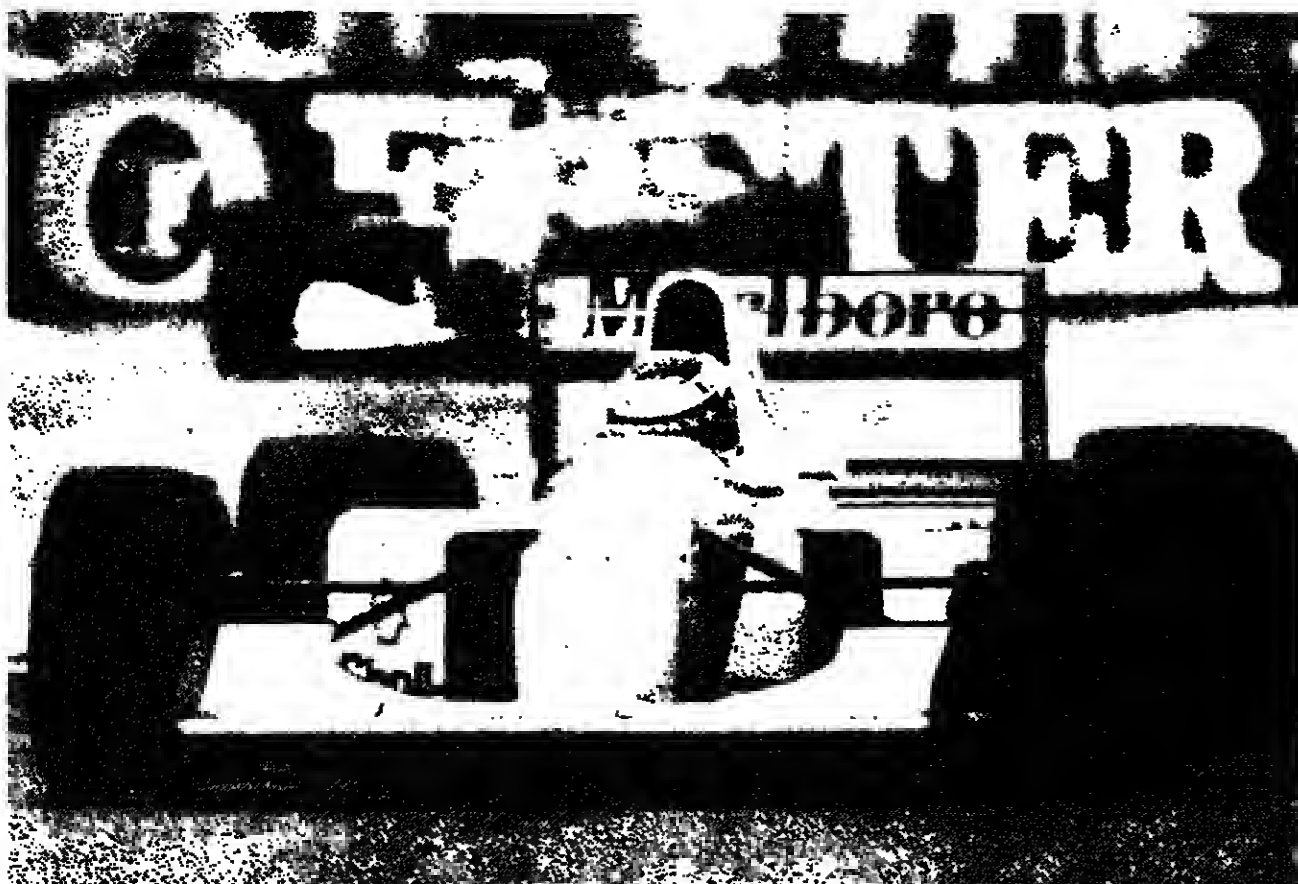
The Austrian driver said he was "just happy to have 10 points."

Reminded that he was now leading the world championship, Berger laughed and said: "That would be nice if this was the last race of the season."

Schumacher and Coulthard had long left the Interlagos track when the decision was announced. Coulthard was flying back to Britain and Schumacher had left for a secret vacation resort in Brazil.

A spokesman for Schumacher confirmed that the teams would appeal.

"Elf are quite confident their fuel is exactly to the rules, and that the testing methods used here are



Austria's Gerhard Berger

wrong," he said.

The tests were carried out by the Federation Internationale de L'Automobile (FIA) with a special travelling laboratory used here for the first time.

The disqualifications meant that only eight of the 26 starters officially finished.

There had been warning signs of what was to come when Benetton and Williams were fined \$30,000 earlier in the day because of using illegal fuel during the qualifying.

After the fine was announced a subdued Schumacher had said he had not known about the problem while Coulthard made no comment.

After the race Schumacher had been "more than happy" with his performance. He admitted he had not believed he could win the race.

"I would have settled for second or third place as we were a little bit behind the Williams," he said.

Praising the Renault engine the team has started using this year, he said it was "a nice situation to be able to pass Ferraris and McLaren on the straight."

Schumacher finished the 71-lap, 305.076 kms race in 1hr 38min 34.154secs at an average speed of 186.919 kph — just 8.060 seconds ahead of Coulthard.

Berger was a lap down. Schumacher had beaten pole man Damon Hill in the other Williams from the start, which he said he "couldn't believe because we have had problems starting and this is the first start I've made" in the new car.

He led until making his first pit stop on lap 18, putting Hill in the lead, but led again when Hill's gearbox failed and the Englishman spun off.

Schumacher made his second fuel stop on lap 35 to put Coulthard in the lead, but the Scot in turn had to come in for fuel and Schumacher

was back in command, leading comfortably to the flag.

The race on a humpy Interlagos circuit with cars that have had little testing took a heavy mechanical toll. Only 15 of the 26 starters lasted half the distance.

The McLaren results were remarkable considering the team's serious problems in testing with a car that handled badly and was uncomfortably tight for the drivers — so much so that Nigel Mansell had to be replaced by the smaller Blundell for the first two races of the season while until a new car is built for him.

Hakkinen also had "the unusual mishap of hitting a bird, which damaged my rear wing and caused the car to lose balance."

Finn Mika Salo in the Tyrrell Yamaha was up as high as third in only his third Grand Prix before "tremendous pain" in his left arm caused by an uncomfortable seating position made him spin and

drive half the race "virtually one handed."

"The car was quicker than me, but I'm quite happy considering it was my first full F1 race distance in dry conditions," he said.

Only three other cars finished — Japanese Aguri Suzuki in a Ligier Mugen Honda, Italian Andrea Montermini in a Pacific Team Lotus and Brazilian Pedro Diniz in the new Forti-Ford.

Among the favoured pre-season teams, the Jordan Peugeot of Brazilian Rubens Barrichello and Briton Eddie Irvine retired with low gearbox hydraulic pressure, and Britain's Johnny Herbert retired the second Benetton, in which he qualified an excellent fourth, also with gearbox failure.

Both Sanber Fords also retired, Heinz Harald Frentzen when the engine just stopped on the circuit, and Karl Wendlinger when a battery lead melted after a heat shield fell off.

## Ajax maintain unbeaten record

LONDON (R) — While the majority of Europe's top players had the weekend off to prepare for this week's European Championship qualifiers, it was a routine weekend for Ajax Amsterdam who won again.

Ajax, heavily favoured to win the European Cup for the first time since they completed a hat-trick of victories in 1973, are even more strongly favoured to win the Dutch League for the second successive season and the 25th time in all.

They maintained their 26-match unbeaten run since the start of the season with a 1-0 win at at Twente Enschede thanks to Nigerian striker Nwankwo Kanu's 16th minute goal.

They have now won 20 and drawn six of their league matches and stayed four points clear of second-placed Roda JC Kerkrade, the surprise package this season, whose only domestic honour came in 1956 when they won the title.

Roda won 2-1 at Feyenoord to stay four points clear of PSV Eindhoven who in turn have a three-point cushion over Twente and have set their sights on a return to European competition next season.

At the bottom of the table Dordrecht '90, who were promoted last season, won for the second successive match after ending their run of 25 games without a win last week.

And for the second successive week, a Dordrecht victory ended with a coach losing his job. Last week Dordrecht beat Sparta Rotterdam 3-1, whose coach Han Berger resigned.

## EUROPEAN SOCCER

Dordrecht, who themselves sacked coach Nico Van Zoghel earlier this month and brought in Jan Versleijen, won again on Friday, topping seventh-placed Willem II Tilburg 3-0. On Saturday Tilburg coach Jan Reek quit.

In France, Paris St. Germain stayed on course for triple cup glory by beating Le Havre 1-0 to reach the final of the newly-introduced French League Cup.

The French champions, out of the running for the title, will play Bastia in the final after the Corsican side beat Montpellier 3-1 in the other semi.

PSG are also in the semi-finals of the European Cup where they play AC Milan and the semis of the French

Cup in which they face old rivals Marseille.

"One final is already a good thing," said trainer Luis Fernandez after his side's victory which came courtesy of a 55th minute penalty from Brazilian star Rai.

"Now we're going for the two others, the French Cup and the most beautiful of all, the European Cup. It's a challenge we're all looking forward to."

There were no top division matches in Spain, England or Italy at the weekend, but Werder Bremen and Borussia Moenchengladbach gained ground on leaders Borussia Dortmund in Germany.

Dortmund drew 0-0 at Stuttgart on Saturday and lead Bremen on goal difference after Bremen won 5-1 at Duisburg on Friday.

Borussia Moenchengladbach, in third place, won 2-0 at Bochum to narrow the gap on Dortmund to just two points.

With 11 matches to go, only four points separate Dortmund from sixth-placed Bayern Munich who beat struggling neighbours TSV Munich 1860 1-0.



Shaquille O'Neal of the Orlando Magic hangs from the basket after dunking the ball (AFP)

## Magic win 4th straight game

By the Associated Press

RESERVE DENNIS Scott hit four 3-pointers and scored 18 of his 32 points in the second quarter as the Orlando Magic won its fourth straight game, 132-98 over the Golden State Warriors on Sunday, in Orlando, Florida.

Shaquille O'Neal scored 24 points and grabbed 12 rebounds before resting the final 10 minutes. Every Orlando player who played scored at least four points.

Latrell Sprewell had 25 points and Carlos Rogers 22 for Golden State, which lost its fourth consecutive game.

The Magic led 33-24 after one period and outscored the Warriors 40-17 in the second quarter for a 32-point half-time lead.

Orlando's Nick Anderson sat out the final three quarters because of tendinitis in his left knee. Teammate Anfernee Hardaway, who has played the last three games with a dislocated finger, left midway through the third quarter and did not return.

Kings 104, Timberwolves 98: In Minneapolis, Mitch Rich-

mond scored 18 of his 23 points in the second half to lead Sacramento to victory.

Richmond hit three 3-pointers and scored 13 points in a 24-10 run that started the third quarter as the Kings won for just the fifth time in 20 games. Spud Webb had 21 points and eight assists for Sacramento, which is battling Denver for the eighth and final Western Conference playoff spot.

Christian Laettner had 23 points and Sean Rooks added 11 points and 10 rebounds for the Wolves, who have lost nine of 12.

Richmond made five 3-pointers to give him 130 for the season, breaking his own franchise record of 127 set last season.

Nuggets 102, Blazers 98: In Portland, Oregon, Reggie Williams scored nine straight points in the final 3:24, including a key tip-in with 30 seconds left, lifting Denver.

Rod Strickland's 32 points led all scorers as the Blazers lost for the fourth time in five games.

Bryant Stith came off the bench to lead the Nuggets'

balanced attack with 19 points. Rodney Rogers added 18 and Williams finished with 17.

Denver defeated Portland for the third time in four games this season.

Strickland was 11-for-16 from the field with 11 assists that gave him a team-high 22 double-doubles this season.

SuperSonics 93, Knicks 82: In Tacoma, Washington, Gary Payton scored 26 points and made a career-best five 3-pointers as Seattle swept the Knicks for the first time since the 1987-88 season.

Payton scored 10 points in the third quarter when the Sonics outscored the Knicks 27-12 and took command of the game.

The Sonics won their fourth straight game and ended the Knicks' two-game winning streak.

Patrick Ewing led New York with 27 points, but just nine in the second half. He also had seven rebounds.

Anthony Mason, playing his first game since being suspended by the Knicks for five games for breaking team rules, had 10 points and 10 rebounds.



Former world No. 1 Monica Seles

## 'Seles has mood swings'

HAMBURG (R) — Former world number one Monica Seles still suffers from severe mood swings after being stabbed in the back two years ago by a man with a kitchen knife, her lawyer was quoted as saying on Sunday.

Gerhard Strate, who speaks to Seles twice a week by phone while representing her in court action against her assailant, told the Welt Am Sonntag newspaper Seles was suffering from "an unstable psychiatric condition."

At times Seles's voice sounds cheerful but then she lapses into melancholy and slow speech which indicates the trouble she has had coming to grips with the attack, the newspaper said.

A retrial of Guenter Pache, a 40-year-old lathe operator from eastern Germany accused of stabbing

Seles at the Hamburg Open in April 1993, started last week.

Jerry May, an American psychiatrist who has been treating Seles, is scheduled to testify on her condition on Tuesday.

Pache received a two-year suspended sentence in October 1993 for grievous bodily harm after a judge ruled he was emotionally retarded and might not have been completely responsible for his actions.

Both Seles and the Hamburg prosecutor's office appealed against the sentence, asking for it to be increased to five years in jail.

Seles, who has not played a tournament since the attack, also wants Pache to be sentenced for attempted manslaughter instead of causing grievous bodily harm.

## SPORTS IN BRIEF

### Farmers cause match postponement

ATHENS (R) — Protesting farmers blocked all exits from the town of Larissa on Sunday and prevented the local soccer club from travelling to play a Greek first division match that was subsequently postponed. Larissa club officials said they had failed to persuade the farmers to let them through so that they could catch their plane to the island of Crete for the match against OFI. Thousands of farmers have been blocking the main highway linking Athens and the northern port of Salonika for the past week, cutting all traffic outside Larissa and two other locations. The farmers are protesting about a new law which will force them to pay more taxes. They also want higher prices for their products.

### Ethiopian athletes missing

LONDON (R) — British police said Sunday three Ethiopian women athletes and their coach had disappeared in Britain after taking part in the World Cross Country Championships. The rest of their squad flew home from the northeast of England after Saturday's competition in Durham, but the four secretly boarded a train to London, leaving notes for teammates saying they did not intend returning to Africa. Inspector Derek Bushby said there was no suggestion the women had committed any offence and they were at liberty to stay in Britain until their visas expired at the end of this month.

### Benfica booted off

LISBON (R) — Benfica were booted off the pitch after they crashed 3-1 at home to Guimaraes on Sunday, leaving them little hope of retaining the Portuguese league title. Hampered by the absence of four players through suspension, Benfica were left frustrated by a host of close calls in the first half. Dimas Teixeira, Edilson Ferreira and Paulo Bento each hit a post in the space of 12 minutes for the home side. Benfica went into the game without Brazilian defenders Carlos Mozer, William Andrade and Paulo Pereira — suspended for one match each — and Argentine Claudio Caniggia, who is banned for two matches.

### Oklahoma State in NCAA semis

EAST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey (R) — Fourth-seeded Oklahoma State upset second-seeded Massachusetts 68-54 in the Eastern Regional final on Sunday to earn a berth in the NCAA basketball tournament's final four for the first time in 44 years. Oklahoma State will travel to Seattle for next week's final four, along with former national champions UCLA and North Carolina, which won regional finals on Saturday. Oklahoma State will play top-ranked UCLA next weekend. In the Midwest Regional final, defending national champions Arkansas was leading Virginia 27-25 at half-time in the battle for the remaining final four slot.

### Belgium without key players

BRUSSELS (AFP) — Belgium will be without four key players when they face Spain in a crucial European Championship qualifying match at Seville Wednesday. Goalkeeper

Michel Preud'homme, who now plays for Benfica in Portugal, and midfielder Franky Van der Elst have retired from international football while playmaker Enzo Scifo and sweeper and captain Georges Grun are both recovering from long-term injuries. National coach Paul Van Himst was expected to name Bertrand Crasson as sweeper behind an insecure-looking defence comprising Regis Genaux, Pascal Renier, Mann Karagiannis and Rudi Smids. Standard Liege's Gilbert Bodart takes over from Preud'homme, who was voted the number one goalkeeper in last year's World Cup finals.

### Court jails star high jumper

SHANGHAI (AFP) — Former Chinese athletics star Ni Zhiqing has been sentenced to eight years in prison for accepting bribes, a newspaper reported Monday. Ni, a former champion high jumper who became vice-director of the Fujian province sports committee, was found guilty of accepting two bribes worth 57,000 yuan (\$6,700) over a deal to sell waist pouches to the committee. Ni jumped 2.29 metres at China's national games in 1971, during the upheavals of the 1956-76 Cultural Revolution. It would have been a world record but was never recognised internationally as there were no foreign observers.

### FA ponder England away ban

LONDON (AFP) — The Football Association (FA) could ban England international matches abroad unless the team is accompanied by Scotland Yard detectives capable of identifying troublemakers, an FA spokesman indicated here Sunday. The suggestion follows the riot at the England/Ireland international in Dublin last month which resulted in the match being abandoned. Irish police had refused help from British forces. "If we can't export our own intelligence with us and have our own intelligence officers on site where we are playing then it would not be sensible to go to that event and play," said the FA spokesman. England's next away fixture is October's match against Norway.

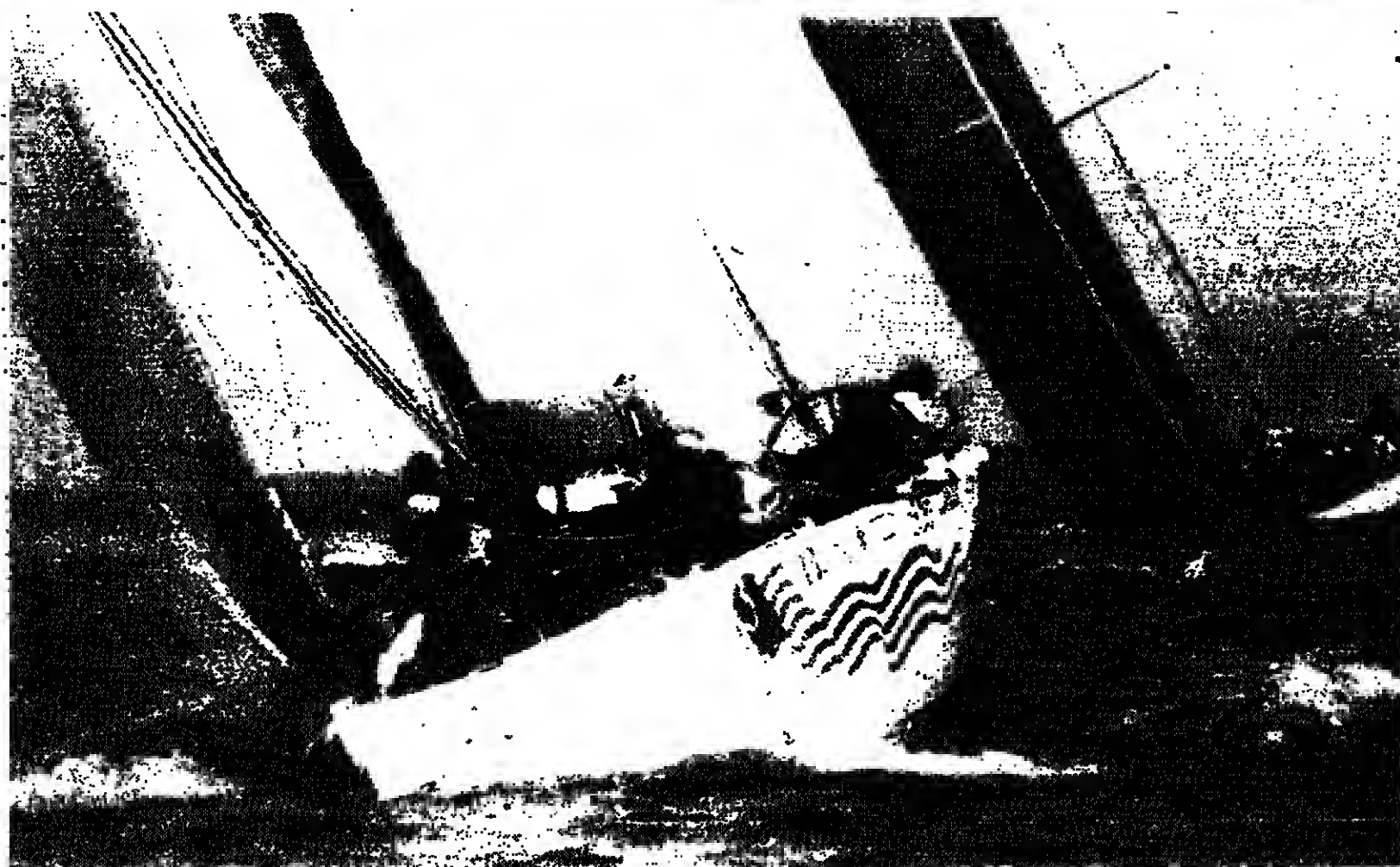
### Panathinaikos retain lead

ATHENS (AP) — With two goals in two minutes, Panathinaikos Athens downed cross-town AEK 3-0 over the weekend to retain a lead in the first division soccer league. After 25 rounds, Panathinaikos has 64 points, as against 48 of AEK in second place. Olympiakos Piraeus, which played later against Paok Salonica, is in third place with 46 points from 24 games. Aris Salonica beat last-place Kavala 3-1 at home to retain fourth place with 45 points.

### Romario's success credited to church

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — World Cup star Romario's most recent successes result from his participation in a Japanese-founded messianic church which has branches in Brazil, the Rio daily Jornal Do Brasil reported Sunday. Romario received a 40-minute healing from one of the church's members before scoring three goals Thursday in leading his Flamengo team to a 3-2 victory over arch rival Botafogo.





America3 (left) takes the lead in the America's Cup semifinal race against Dennis Conner's Stars and Stripes (AFP photo)

## Stars and Stripes withdraws to avoid sinking

SAN DIEGO (AFP) — For a while Sunday, Dennis Conner felt that same sinking feeling that his old America's Cup rival John Bertrand had three weeks earlier.

Conner's Stars and Stripes dropped out of its race against PACT 95's Young America when it started taking on water on the second upwind leg, arousing memories of March 5 when Bertrand's ood Australia broke apart and sank.

Bertrand had better luck Sunday when his crew sailed the resurrected AUS 31 to a 40-second win over Chris Dickson's TAG Heuer to take a leg up in the fight to follow Team New Zealand into the finals of the challenger trials.

Conditions were moderate, with winds of 7 knots building to 15 and three-to-four-foot seas. AUS 35 was lost in such rougher conditions.

In the second challenger semi-final race, Team New Zealand (6-0) sailed away

from Nippon (0-6) by 3:54. The Japanese, burdened with a slower boat and apparently inferior sails, were never in contention.

Conner's prospects also were questionable. For a few minutes his boat appeared to be in danger of sinking.

Stars and Stripes was not scheduled to race Monday, so there was an extra day to repair the damage, but Con-

ner said Sunday evening that it wasn't immediately known if that would be enough.

"It's a serious problem," he said. "We'll make every effort to be out there Tuesday."

The damage was believed to be a break in the hull around the keel. After some frantic bailing and pumping by the crew, the danger subsided and the boat was towed

safely back into San Diego Bay.

Young America, which led by 16 seconds at the previous mark, completed the race to claim the win and clinch a berth in the defender finals starting April 10.

Stars and Stripes, with a 2-3 record after Sunday's setback, is contesting the other slot with America3's almost-all-woman Mighty Mary (1-3).

Foredeck man Ralf Steitz said, "we had a noise out of the keel area."

Someone else asked, "did anyone else hear anything that was very convincing?"

Then... "A lot of water. Get the tender Betsy ready with the pump."

Conner said later, "it soon became apparent we were taking on a fair amount of water. We went into our emergency drill."

Hand pumps were started, air bags were placed on board, a flotation buoy was hoisted to the top of the mast and the crew put on life jackets.

Conner said, "I don't think it was the same as what Rod Davis described when AUS 35 sank. Nobody asked, 'are we going to go down, Dennis?' That would have got my attention, because as you know I don't swim very well."

Later, a U.S. Coast Guard boat provided an electric pump.

## America's Cup

Midway on the second upwind leg, Stars and Stripes' crewman Wally Henry was below decks to pack and unpack sails when he noticed water coming in through the hull and called out an alarm.

The crew slacked the sails to stop the boat and called in its chase boat for assistance.

Conner didn't think the boat had struck anything, although some crew on

"We didn't hear any noise on the boat," Conner said. "I didn't feel any lurch, and I didn't know what Henry said, but he said it in a way that got our attention."

Bowman Greg Prussia ducked below to check the problem and emerged about 15 seconds later to say, "It's just Wally being overconcerned. Keep going."

Another crewman said, "check the rig," but the sails were momentarily re-trimmed.

## Sanchez Vicario top seed at Family Circle Cup

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, South Carolina (AP) — Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, the top-ranked player in the world, has a hard time ignoring Steffi Graf, even when the Spaniard knows she has to.

"She's the player who is behind me and win's coming, pushing really hard and really strong," said Sanchez Vicario, who is top-seeded in the Family Circle Cup at Sea Pines Resort.

Graf, who won't play the Family Circle this week, is indeed pushing hard. She won the Lipton Championships on Saturday and has not lost a set in 15 matches this year. Sanchez Vicario, who has not won any of her three 1995 tournaments, can't be worried about that.

"I'm just looking to play my own game and keep continuing to work as good as at the same level," she said. "I'm not thinking about trying to see who is doing well also or other players."

Some of those players doing well won't be competing in this week's tournament, which began Monday. Australian Open champion Mary Pierce withdrew with a groin injury, while leading American Lindsay Davenport pulled out because a virus that forced her to miss the Lipton doubles title game this week.

The competitors who aren't there make no difference, says defending Family Circle champion Conchita Martinez, who will be playing.

"You can't think about that," she said. "The only thing you have to think about is the first match and the second and the third."

Martinez has had trouble

getting to the third one this season. Her one trip to a final this season came at the Delray Beach, Florida, tournament on March 12 and ended in a 6-2, 6-4 loss to Graf. She also was bounced early at Indian Wells, California.

"I'm having a hard time," she said. "I just have to pick

up my confidence in winning some matches."

If form holds true, Martinez, seeded second, would likely face Sanchez Vicario in the final.

Sanchez Vicario lost to Pierce in the Australian Open final and in the semifinals of the Indian Wells and

Lipton tournaments. The losses have only increased her desire to remain at the top, she said.

"I think I have good training now and I'm stronger," she said. "I just need to play in more matches. Hopefully, in the states and in the clay court season, I'll be able to win my first tournaments of the year."

Without Davenport and Pierce, a former American now playing for France, there is a dearth of American participation at the Family Circle. Martina Navratilova retired with a flourish last season and former phenom Jennifer Capriati is still rounding into form after a bout with substance abuse.

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## Agassi tops Sampras to win Lipton title

KEY BISCAINE (R) — Andre Agassi won a third-set tie-break Sunday to snatch the Lipton Championships title from Pete Sampras and close in on his world number one ranking in the latest chapter of what has become the sport's most exciting rivalry.

In the first men's final in the 11-year-old tournament to feature the world's top two players, second seed Agassi rallied for a 3-6 6-2 7-6 (7-3) victory over Sampras, avenging a loss in the Indian Wells final 13 days ago.

Agassi, who beat Sampras in the Australian Open final in their other 1995 meeting, picked up \$350,000 and his third title of the year.

Sampras, who won this event in 1993 and 1994, earned \$74,000 as runner-up and retained his number one ranking for the 81st consecutive week, but by a slim margin.

Sampras looked on his way to a third successive Lipton crown when he got off to a quick start. But a remarkable run by Agassi in the second set dramatically changed the complexion of the match.

"Pete was serving so big at the start and it's always tough when he gets a lead," Agassi said.

"I had to fight really hard to say in there with him. It boiled down to both of us busting our huts out here and it just happened to go my way," added Agassi, who raised his 1995 match record to 25-2.

Sampras took charge early by getting out to a fast 3-0 lead. He saved triple break point in the 14-point ninth

game to claim the first set, 6-3.

Bot at 2-2 in the second set, Sampras' serve started to let him down and Agassi took his game to a new level. The Australian and U.S. Open champion went on a tear, reeling off 19 straight points against the top-ranked Sampras.

From 0-40 down on his serve in that fifth game, Agassi did not lose another point until he won the second set gone 30-0 up in the first game of the third.

"It doesn't happen too often against a guy like Pete," Agassi said of his dramatic run.

"When Pete didn't win that game at 0-40, I think he lost

some intensity. And I got a sense of life in me."

There were no service break opportunities for either player in the third set as they battled into the inevitable tiebreaker.

Sampras, perhaps thinking of his 1-8 tie-break record this year, played too cautiously. Agassi by contrast seized control of every point with his deep groundstrokes.

Agassi reached match point with a brilliant backhand deep into the corner that Sampras dumped into the net.

On the final point, the top seed smacked a backhand wide and Agassi let out a victory whoop and pumped his fists into the air.

## Agassi edges closer

Andre Agassi edged closer to world number one Pete Sampras after his win at the Lipton Championships at Key Biscayne, Florida, Sunday.

Sampras, who has held the top ranking for 80 weeks, is now only 227 points ahead of his fellow American.

1. Pete Sampras (USA)	4684 pts
2. Andre Agassi (USA)	4457
3. Boris Becker (Ger)	3410
4. Michael Chang (USA)	2697
5. Sergi Bruguera (Spa)	2619
6. Yevgeny Kafelnikov (Rus)	2538
7. Alberto Berasategui (Spa)	2488
8. Michael Stich (Ger)	2467
9. Goran Ivanisevic (Cro)	2394
10. Richard Krajicek (Ned)	2329
11. Wayne Ferreira (AFS)	2030
12. Andrei Medvedev (Ukr)	1977
13. Todd Martin (USA)	1974
14. Magnus Larsson (Swe)	1962
15. Jim Courier (USA)	1839
16. Stefan Edberg (Swe)	1786
17. Thomas Muster (Aut)	1593
18. Marc Rosset (Svi)	1506
19. Andrea Gaudenzi (Ita)	1439
20. Thomas Enqvist (Swe)	1299

## GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMAR HIRSCH  
THE WINNING LEAD

Both vulnerable. South deals.  
NORTH  
7 6  
5 4  
K Q J 9 7 2  
J 8  
WEST EAST  
Q 10 5 4 K 8 8 3  
8 6 3 K J 10 2  
8 8 10 5 3  
A 10 9 4 2 K Q  
A J 2  
A Q 7  
A 6 4  
8 7 6 5

The bidding:  
South West North East  
1 NT Pass 3 NT Pass  
Pass Pass  
Opening lead: 7

Combinatorial articles and books have been written about the choice of an opening lead. The problems are immense. First, you have to choose the suit to lead and then you have to select the right card. This hand is from a rubber bridge game at the Honors Club in New York.

Note North's raise to three no trumps. When you have a good six-card suit, throw point count out the window. If the suit produces six tricks, it is worth far more than some random 10-10-10-10.

There are those who believe that, when the opponents do not probe for a major-suit fit and settle in a no-trump game, you should lead a major. They would have led a spade here—and been sorely disappointed. Declarer would win, run six diamond tricks, then take the heart finesse for the fulfilling trick.

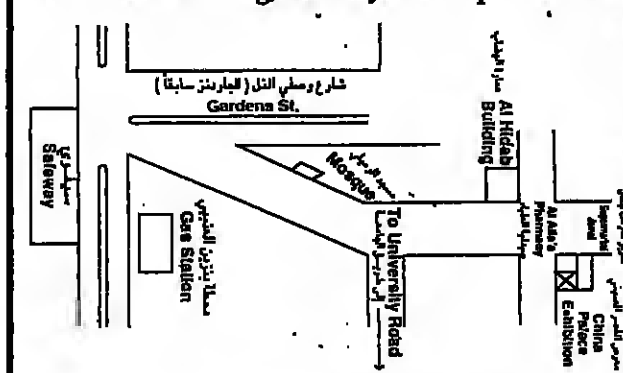
Others are stout advocates of leading your long suit no matter what. Obviously, on this deal a club would be very successful. The question is: Which club should you lead? Some would start the ten—the middle card from an interior sequence. That would be disastrous for the defense. Suppose East wins the king and returns the queen. If West allows partner to hold the trick, there's no last entry back to cash the winning clubs. If West overtakes, declarer's eight becomes a stopper.

At the table, West found the winning lead of the fourth-best club. Now West was able to overtake the second round of clubs and cash out the suit for a one-trick set. Note that, had West's suit been headed by A 10 9 8, the correct lead would be the ten!

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Tom Hanks in <b>Forrest Gump</b> Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:15, 9:15		Andy Garcia — Mee Ryan in <b>When A Man Loves A Woman</b> Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30		<b>CONCORD '1'</b> Comedian star: Adel Imam — Bakhit & Andadileh Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:00, 8:30, 11:00 <b>CONCORD '2'</b> Jean-Claude Van Damme <b>STREET FIGHTER</b> Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5:45, 11:00		Musa Hijazin "Sum'a" In the political satire <b>Hi Citizen</b> written and directed by Mohammad Al Shawarba daily on 8:30 p.m. The theatre closes on Monday — Halfa Al Agha in the children's play ☆☆ Sa'di's Return ☆☆	Presents <b>Abu Awwad</b> In the social comedy <b>Punctured Bag</b> The theatre is closed on Mondays Tickets are available all day	Presents: The political satire: <b>AL SALAM YA SALAM</b> at 8:30 p.m. For reservation, please call 625155 The theatre is closed Saturdays & Sundays

مكتبة الامم المتحدة



## Israel blockades Sidon fishing, stages air raids

SIDON, Lebanon (Agencies) — The Israeli navy opened fire near Lebanese fishing boats off Sidon on Monday, apparently extending northwards a blockade imposed nearly a decade ago on its twin city of Tyre.

Sidon fishermen said Israeli gunboats unleashed a hail of machine-gun fire when they sailed at dawn more than one kilometre out to sea off the South Lebanon port. They said they were forced to return to port when the Israelis fired in the water at nets near a flotilla of 20 wooden fishing boats off Sidon, 40 kilometres south of Beirut.

The Israeli action ignored a weekend protest by fishermen in Tyre, 35 kilometres further south, who handed a petition to a U.N. official asking United Nations Secretary General Boutros Ghali to intervene to stop the blockade.

The petition called the Israeli action "arrogant aggression." Tyre's 1,500 fishermen, among the most impoverished inhabitants of South Lebanon, have been blockaded since Feb. 8, barred from sailing more than one kilometre out to sea and unable to reach their traditional

fishing beds.

Israel extended the blockade last month to Sidon and other ports just south of Beirut, before announcing that it was lifting it on March 10 when U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher visited the region.

But Israel reimposed the measure on Tyre a day after Mr. Christopher's departure, and its gunboats have since repeatedly fired near the Tyre fishermen as they try to reach their usual fishing areas.

Monday's incident was the first time the Israelis have fired off Sidon since Mr. Christopher left on March 16. Israel enforced the blockade to force the Lebanese army to ease security checks on travellers to and from its occupation zone in South Lebanon.

Beirut has refused to ease the checks, saying they are legitimate and necessary because of suspicions that agents from the zone set off a car bomb that killed three people in a Hizbollah (Party of God) district of Beirut last December.

Israeli warplanes meanwhile held Hizbollah strongholds in southern Lebanon on Monday. Four jet fighters fired

several missiles in five sorties over the Iqlim Al Tufah hills, a sparsely inhabited region where Hizbollah has strongholds dug into the rock, police said.

Huge columns of black smoke billowed over the Jabal Rafih hill in the Iqlim Al Tufah, which the warplanes pounded for 20 minutes, witnesses said.

Four other warplanes buzzed the area and fired heat-seeking balloons to ward off any attack from the ground, witnesses added.

Hizbollah guerrillas and Lebanese army troops fired anti-aircraft guns at the warplanes but missed their targets.

On Saturday Hizbollah claimed an explosion in South Lebanon which it said killed four pro-Israeli militiamen but the South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia said the attack left one civilian dead.

The latest raid brought to eight the number of air attacks by Israeli warplanes on Hizbollah and Palestinian bases in Lebanon since the start of 1995, including six on Hizbollah strongholds in the Iqlim Al Tufah.

Two Hizbollah and three Palestinians were killed in these air attacks.



REGENT VISITS MINISTRY: His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah, the Regent, on Monday visited the Ministry of Interior where he was received by Interior Minister Salameh Hamad and senior ministry officials. Prince Abdullah, who was accompanied on the visit by His Royal Highness Prince Ghazi Ben Mohammad, the King's cultural secretary, was briefed on preparations taken by the ministry for holding the next municipal elections in various parts of the Kingdom.

The Regent issued directives dealing with facilitations of all procedures related to the elections to guarantee a larger participation by citizens in the electoral process. Also Monday, Prince Abdullah visited the Public Security Department (PSD) and met with PSD Director Lieutenant-General Abdul Rahman Al Adwan (see photo above). The Regent was reassured on services offered by the PSD to citizens.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### "I'll wind" from Egypt — Israeli president

TEL AVIV (AFP) — President Ezer Weizman said Monday that there was an "ill wind blowing across the Nile" following Egypt's refusal to take part in an international air traffic control conference in occupied Jerusalem. "An ill wind is blowing across the Nile and I will ask President Hosni Mubarak to explain this boycott," Mr. Weizman said as he opened the conference. According to the organisers, Egypt has refused to take part in the meeting because it is being held in Jerusalem. Mr. Weizman went to Cairo in December to try to improve strained relations with Egypt, which became the first Arab country to sign peace with the Jewish state in 1979. As well as the Jerusalem issue, the two countries are locked in a dispute over Israel's refusal to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

### Former Histadrut leader under arrest

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli police have arrested a former leader of the Histadrut union close to the Labour Party as part of an investigation into embezzlement, police said Monday. Yacov Michaeli, formerly a close advisor of Transport Minister Israel Kassar, was arrested Sunday after being questioned for several hours, they added. He is accused of having used Histadrut money to fund Mr. Kassar's campaign to nominate a candidate for the position of prime minister. The Israeli agency Ilim said "numerous Labour Party militants were in a state of shock after Michaeli's arrest." Opinion polls have shown that the popularity of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's Labour Party has fallen over the past three months.

### 22,000 petition Israel for Vanunu release

LONDON (AFP) — Petitions bearing some 22,000 signatures were delivered to the Israeli embassy here Monday demanding the release of Mordechai Vanunu, jailed in Israel for giving nuclear secrets to the British press. Actress Susannah York and playwright Harold Pinter were among a delegation that delivered the petitions. Mr. Vanunu is starting his ninth year in solitary confinement in Israel's Ashkelon prison after being jailed in 1986.

### Cyprus asks for dialogue with WEU

NICOSIA (R) — Cyprus has asked for a dialogue with the Western European Union (WEU) in the hope of eventual membership, a government spokesman said Monday. "Our foreign minister has sent a letter to the WEU asking for a dialogue... the final target is the island's admission," the spokesman Yianakis Cassoulides told journalists. The 10-member WEU, an inter-governmental organisation for European cooperation in security and defence, has been revitalised in recent years. Members are Germany, France, Greece, Britain, Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain and Portugal.

### Captives had taken refuge in Sudan — Hamas

GAZA CITY (AFP) — The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, said Monday that two young Palestinians arrested by the Israeli army at Gaza's border with Egypt had taken refuge in Sudan for the last year. Musa Luheidi, 21, and Suleiman Abdullah Abed Mahali, 24, were on an Israeli wanted list for the killing of Palestinian collaborators. The two were arrested on Sunday near the Rafah crossing between the autonomous Gaza Strip and Egypt. Two others in their group eluded the army and slipped into the Strip. The arrested Palestinians fled to Sudan more than a year ago, when the Israeli army cracked down on militants before withdrawing for the launch of self-rule in May.

### Police kill 8 suspects in Egypt

CAIRO (R) — Police said they killed eight suspected Muslim militants in southern Egypt on Monday in two separate early morning raids. They said four were killed in a village near Assiut 320 kilometres south of Cairo after a raid on their hideout. They were wanted for taking part in attacks on policemen. Earlier, four suspects were killed in the village of Samalut in the nearby Minya province. 260 kilometres south of Cairo. Police said they were sought in connection with an attack in which three policemen died. In both incidents on Monday, police said the suspects resisted arrest and started shooting. Human rights groups have charged that police follow a shoot-to-kill policy without giving suspects a chance to surrender.

### 40 feared dead in Turkey mine explosion

ANKARA (AFP) — Twenty miners were killed and another 20 reported missing following an explosion in a coalmine in the eastern Sogun region of Turkey Anatolian news agency said Monday. It reported that authorities had found 15 bodies in the mine, adding to the official death toll from earlier of five dead and nine injured. There was still no explanation for the explosion which occurred Sunday, but the prefect for the Yozgat area, Ertugrul Ersoy, said early Monday methane gas was not the reason. Rescue operations continued through the day to recover the corpses and mine authorities installed a ventilator to suck out carbon monoxide which had built up in the blast area.

### Nafel wins journalists' elections

CAIRO (R) — A government candidate has beaten off competition to win a second two-year term as the president of the Egyptian Journalists Union. The union's judicial committee, which supervised the elections for the top post, announced late on Sunday that Ibrahim Nafel won 1435 votes to 1102 for his main leftist opponent, Galal Aref. Mr. Aref told Reuters on Sunday, when the elections were held, that he was running "to assure the union's independence from the government or any other political party." Early results for the 12-member union council have indicated growing support for political Islamic groups in the traditionally pro-government union.

## Qatar's emir calls on Israel to sign NPT

DOHA (AP) — The emir of Qatar on Monday urged that the Middle East be declared a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and called on Israel to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Addressing a new session of the country's advisory council, Sheikh Khalifa Ben Hamad Al Thani, said that for peace to be achieved in the region, all Middle Eastern countries, including Israel, have to commit themselves to the NPT which comes up for renewal next month.

"It is illogical to allow a certain state to own nuclear weapons while its neighbours are denied possession of such weapons," Sheikh Khalifa said.

The emir spoke as Arab countries are hatching a campaign led by Israel demanding Israel, considered to be the region's only nuclear power, join the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Egypt, which made peace with Israel in 1979 and is a signatory of the NPT, insists that it will not support a renewal of the 1970 treaty if Israel does not sign as well.

Foreign ministers of the 22-member Arab League recently backed Egypt. But a final resolution did not commit them to a collective stand on the NPT renewal talks, leaving each state to vote individually.

Sheikh Khalifa, whose country has border disputes with Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, said Qatar accords the "utmost importance" to supporting the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and "to maintaining stability in our region."

The GCC comprises Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain and Oman.

Qatar is way ahead of its GCC partners in efforts to normalise ties with Iraq and in developing close links with Iran, while paving the way for cooperation with Israel.

Welcoming Jordan's Oct. 26 peace agreement with Israel as another step toward a regional peace settlement, Sheikh Khalifa emphasised the importance of Israel achieving agreements with Lebanon and Syria.

He called for an Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab lands, including Jerusalem, the Golan Heights of Syria and South Lebanon.

Touching on domestic issues, the emir said Qatar's current national plan was aimed at reinforcing the country's economy by establishing an industrial base pinned mainly on natural gas, rather than oil.

## COLUMN

### Highwire record stunt nearly ended in tragedy

BERLIN (AFP) — A high-wire walker saved himself in the nick of time Sunday when he lost his balance 30 metres (162 feet) from the ground during an attempt to set a new world record for the highest tightrope stunt. Watched by thousands of onlookers and Berlin television viewers, Matthias Thier, 26, was half way along a 620 metre (2,035 foot) long wire strung between the television broadcasting tower and the cathedral when he stumbled and dropped his balancing pole. He clutched at the wire to stop himself falling and after a few minutes recovered himself sufficiently to climb down a cable fixed to the highwire to stop it oscillating. Initially it was Thier's father Alfredo who was to make the risky wire walk but Matthias stood in at the last minute when his father went down with the fall. The stunt was promoted to symbolise mankind walking a tightrope between global destruction and protection of the environment and was part of the run-up to the United Nations Conference on Climate Change and Global Warming opening Tuesday in the German capital.

### Bolshoi conductor quits as row rumbles on

MOSCOW (R) — The head of the Bolshoi Opera company resigned Monday, the second high-ranking artist to quit in a month in a protracted row over the leadership of the world-famous theatre, ITAR-TASS news agency said. Alexander Lazarev, chief conductor and head of the opera company for seven years, was a supporter of former artistic director Yuri Grigorovich, who stood down in early March over a long-running dispute with Bolshoi chief Vladimir Kozlov. A third Bolshoi member, chief designer Valery Levant, had also tendered his resignation, TASS said. It was not immediately possible to confirm the news, since the Bolshoi is always closed Monday. Grigorovich and his supporters accused Kozlov of being incompetent and were upset at the introduction of short-term contracts to replace the Soviet era jobs-for-life system. TASS quoted Lazarev as saying in a statement his resignation was "directly linked to the reforms of the administrative system and the artistic leadership (of the Bolshoi)... which has scored a convincing victory over the people of art and art itself." Lazarev had already left for London, apparently for a permanent job, TASS said.

### Prince Charles to produce soft drinks

LONDON (AFP) — Prince Charles is to produce soft drinks in partnership with Coca-Cola and Schweppes using fruits and herbs grown at Highgrove, his property in western England, the Daily Mirror reported Monday. The paper, which quoted the Prince of Wales's private secretary Richard Ayldred, said an official announcement about the venture would be made Wednesday by Duchy Originals Limited, the firm which makes and markets the prince's biscuits known as the Duchy Originals. As for the biscuit venture, the profits from the sales of the drinks will go entirely to charities he has founded. On Sunday, the Sunday Times said the prince had agreed to let Disney market videos of the cartoon The Old Man And The Gorms based on a story he wrote for children.

### Simpson wins 'razzie' for worst supporting actor

LOS ANGELES (R) — As if O.J. Simpson doesn't have enough problems, the former American football star was "dishonored" Sunday with a Golden Razzie Award for one of the worst film performances of 1994. In the Golden Raspberry Foundation's annual spoof of the Academy Awards, Simpson — who is on trial on double-murder charges — was named worst supporting actor for his role in the comedy Naked Gun 33 1/3.

## Kabul: Pakistan behind Taliban

KABUL (Agencies) — A senior Defence Ministry official Monday accused Pakistan of covertly supporting the Afghan Taliban movement which is battling forces loyal to President Burhanuddin Rabbani.

"Some sort of Pakistani support is behind the Taliban, and other countries are also involved," General Yunus Qanooni of the Defence Ministry said.

Gen. Qanooni, who in his dual roles as political chief of the Defence Ministry and head of the Kabul Security Commission, is regarded as the de facto defence minister, declined to specify which other nations were backing the Taliban.

But he was unequivocal on Pakistan's involvement with the militant religious movement, which has seized control of nine provincial Afghan capitals since last fall.

According to earlier reports, the Taliban received their training in Pakistani religious schools.

(Continued on page 7)

## France sells Kuwait \$55m in boats, radar

KUWAIT (Agencies) — France on Monday sold Kuwait eight missile-carrying patrol boats worth about \$500 million in its biggest defence contract with Kuwait since the Gulf war.

Visiting French Defence Minister Francois Leotard said that under contracts signed by him and Kuwaiti counterpart Sheikh Ahmad Hamoud Al Sahab France would also supply a military radar made by Thomson for about \$54 million.

Mr. Leotard, announcing the contracts at a news conference, recalled France's participation in the U.S.-led coalition that ended Iraq's seven-month occupation in 1991 and called on Iraq to comply with all U.N. Gulf crisis resolutions.

He called for the release of Kuwaitis detained in the occupation and reportedly still held by Baghdad.

France's only substantial defence sale to Kuwait since the war has been for Aerospace missile testing and support systems worth between \$15 million and \$20 million.

Kuwait signed a defence pact with France in 1992 similar to those reached with the United States and Britain following the war. Kuwait has

also signed a defence pact with Russia and initiated a military agreement with China.

The 42-metre boats will carry anti-air and air defence missiles and 20-metre and 40-metre cannons. The hulls will be built by France's constructions Mecaniques de Normandie (CMN) and the engines by German company MTU.

CMN is to refit one of only two Kuwaiti gunships which survived the Gulf war, a 57-metre missile boat built by the German firm Luerssen. The French company is also building three patrol boats for the Omani navy.

In a drive to rebuild the navy, Kuwait wants between five and six frigates, according to General Daniel Berthault, the chief negotiator for French arms exports.

France would be in contention with U.S. and other European firms for the contract, worth five times more than the gunboats.

But Kuwait faces financial restraints after having already spent \$6 billion on U.S. armoured vehicles and Patriot missiles, \$1.2 billion on British armoured vehicles

(Continued on page 7)

## Manila police link Yousef to a series of bizarre plots

MANILA (AP) — The alleged mastermind of the World Trade Centre bombing personally planted a bomb that exploded on a Philippine airliner, planned air raids on the U.S. and Israeli embassies and was preparing to blow up American jets until police raided his Manila hideout, Philippine police believe.

Claims by the Philippine national police are based on computer diskettes and other materials seized Jan. 6 when officers raided Ramzi Yousef's room in the Josefa apartments, located about 100 metres from the residence used by Pope John Paul II during his visit here that month.

Police believe Yousef, who was arrested in Pakistan last month and deported to the United States, also planned to assassinate the Pope by triggering radio-controlled bombs along his route.

Yousef, who now says his real name is Abdul Bassit Balochi, was charged in the February 1993 World Trade Centre in New York bombing that killed six people and injured more than 1,000.

Yousef's activities in Manila emerged after fire broke out in the apartment he had rented here last December under the name Naji Hadad. Police raided the flat and arrested a companion, said Ahmad, but Yousef disappeared.

Police refuse to say whether they are still holding Ahmad.

In a series of reports released last week, police said Yousef's fingerprints were found in the apartment. They also seized diskettes and

documents, including schedules for United Airlines and Philippine Airlines, as well as nitroglycerine and other "bomb-making materials."

Many of the allegations against Yousef had been leaked unofficially to Filipino reporters over the past two months. But the latest claims, much more detailed, were released after the surrender last week of Edwin Angeles, alleged operations chief of a Filipino extremist group, Abu Sayyaf.

Police said Angeles, who worked as a translator in Libya from 1990 until 1992, confirmed links between the Abu Sayyaf group and Yousef. Police said Angeles provided new, undisclosed details about Yousef's activities in Manila and confirmed much of the information which had been deciphered from the diskettes and documents seized in the Jan. 6 raid.

According to police, Yousef planned to launch a series of attacks Jan. 10, two days before the Pope arrived. It appeared that Yousef had mapped out a series of scenarios, including bombing the papal route and the U.S. and Israeli embassies.

Another option seriously considered was throwing bombs directly at the U.S. and Israeli embassies through the use of a fixed-wing type of aircraft, "one of the police reports said."

According to the report, Yousef and a companion contacted a charter company outside Manila in late December about renting a small plane. It also said a document found in the January raid linked Yousef to the Dec. 11

explosion aboard a Philippine Airlines jet en route from Cebu to Tokyo.

The pilot landed the plane safely on Okinawa, but one Japanese man was killed and 10 others were injured in the blast.

Police said Yousef boarded the flight in Manila under the name Amaldo Foriani, hid the bomb in the life vest under the seat while attendants were serving snacks and then got off in Cebu. He was able to slip the bomb past airport X-ray machines because it was made of liquid nitroglycerine which is virtually undetectable, police said.

U.S. and Philippine authorities believe the December bombing was a test run for attacks on American jetliners over the Pacific.

"It is highly probable that United Airlines flights number one and number two between Hong Kong, Singapore and Los Angeles were targets for bombing," the police report said.

On Jan. 9, the Federal Aviation Administration issued a security alert for all American commercial flights over the Pacific and ordered stringent checks at airports served by U.S. carriers.

The measures included a ban on all aerosols and liquids except infants' milk in hand-carried luggage.

"The use by the group of nitro cellulose/glycerine which could easily pass X-ray machines at local airports is highly significant because it spells a dramatic development in terrorist bombings in the country," the national police said in a classified report seen by the Associated Press.